get the tools, get the knowledge!

Annexes: C D E F indicators toolkit

successful town centres – developing effective strategies.
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Footfall.
This indicator refers to the number of people walking up and down a given town centre (or single street) regardless of their reasons for doing so. Typical reasons may include shopping, a pleasant stroll, going to work or college, to the cinema or for a meal, accessing public services, visiting friends or simply passing through. Footfall is often linked to the level of attractiveness of a location and its ability to satisfy customer and visitor needs and expectations successfully.

Geographical catchment.
This indicator refers to the places (postcodes in this case) that people have travelled from to visit the town centre. A town centre doesn’t just serve those who live and work directly in it. It tends to attract people from neighbouring areas and often from further afield. For a town centre to remain resilient in its offer of products and services, it needs to have a good understanding not only of its visitors’ preferences but also where they live, which is likely to be related to a number of other socio-economic variables (e.g. income, education). A thorough understanding of this indicator will help a town centre to ensure it has the right retail, service and leisure offer, signage, transport infrastructure and that, ultimately, it caters for the needs and aspirations of its visitors including local residents visiting “their” town centre.

Access.
This indicator refers to the mode(s) of transport used by visitors and local residents to reach the town centre. A good understanding of how people access a town centre can help urban planners and key decision makers with investment decisions. Similarly, businesses in a town centre will be interested in this information in order to establish the potential demand for added value offers to customers (e.g. free home delivery or refunding bus fares or parking charges if they spend over a threshold). In some cases, decisions by existing and potential visitors to come to a town centre may also be influenced by their awareness of access options, which may or may not tally with available modes of transport actually available, which suggests there is a need for marketing and communications.

Car Parking.
This indicator refers to the total car parking capacity (public and private) and use in an around the town centre. For many people, the possibility of driving into town and parking their car in a safe car park remains a considerable element of convenience-based attractiveness as it grants them a higher sense of perceived comfort and independence. Many retailers and high street businesses would tend to agree with this and, in some cases, would prefer for their customers to be able to park near their shop or outlet for ease of access. The final value of this indicator includes deliberately park-and-ride car parking spaces as this is an option sometimes favoured by visitors who are keen to avoid or reduce their impact on traffic congestion and air pollution in town centres. Measuring and monitoring the level of car park usage, along with footfall and retail sales contributes to a dynamic picture of activity levels in the town centre. Over time, this data can provide the basis of a comparison between actual versus perceived variances of activity and the impact of initiatives like events, special offers and the arrival or departure of high profile businesses (e.g. closure of Woolworths or the opening of a Primark). When looked at alongside “geographical catchment” it becomes possible to see what draws people in from further afield.

Community spirit.
This indicator attempts to capture local perception and experience of the strength of the bonds that keep the community together in and around the town centre. Community spirit is closely associated to various elements of social cohesion and, in some cases, a sense of pride of place and even customer loyalty. Stronger community bonds can be instrumental in a town centre’s ability to address and surpass resident and visitors’ needs and expectations by providing genuine local ambassadors for the high street in the form of the area’s local residents themselves. This sentiment can be fundamental to the success of projects and interventions linked to concepts such as localism, consumer loyalty and the Big Society. Community spirit is also a key element of quality of life. Evidence suggests that people who feel part of their place are happier and more willing to get involved in sharing their skills to make things happen locally. This can create a positive spiral of activity, distinctiveness and satisfaction.
<table>
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<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Footfall</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Pedestrian movement, particularly people walking in the town centre for a variety of reasons, which may include shopping, a pleasant stroll, going to work, to the cinema or for a meal, visiting friends or simply passing by.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>There are various gadgets available to help with footfall counts from simple hand held clickers to sophisticated laser beam counters and software linked to CCTV. Other commercial providers of data and market research services include:  - Experian Footfall <a href="http://www.footfall.com/">http://www.footfall.com/</a>  - Springboard <a href="http://www.spring-board.info/perform.shtml">http://www.spring-board.info/perform.shtml</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</td>
<td>In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps: 1. Find retail outlets willing to:  - Share data with you on their gross sales and a plus or minus figure compared to the previous year (for that location only);  - Happy for you to stand outside it to take measurements for a given length of time. These two factors are important as they will allow you to link the results of this indicator to another one, Retail Sales, listed in the “Economic performance” theme.  2. Stand outside these retail outlets and make a note of the date, day of the week, time of day, weather and any other factors (e.g. market day, term break event) that may influence your measurements.  3. Over a period of one hour, count all the people walking past your line of sight in any direction. Make a note of this number after 60 minutes of counting.  4. Compare it to the number you obtained on a different occasion at the same place (same retail outlets) and same time of day the previous week, month, and/or year.  5. Record whether the number has increased or fallen in percentage terms (e.g. 100 people counted on day 1 – 50 people counted on day 2 = 50% decrease in footfall).  6. Repeat as frequently as you have the resources to do so, choosing different times and conditions to build up a picture of activity patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving overall results and reliability</td>
<td>Try gathering data for this indicator at different locations on the high street and in some of the streets leading to the town centre to improve your overall picture of footfall flows. Footfall may also vary from morning to afternoon and evening, so you may want to gather data at different times of the day to get a richer appreciation of your town centre’s varying pulse. Most shopping centres and many larger retailers have automated footfall counters on their main doors. These figures are useful to add to your data mix but do not cover independent shops, and the town centre as a whole. Similarly, figures from larger leisure operators (e.g. cinemas, theatres and bingo halls) can add depth to the activity picture for your town centre. Automated footfall counting in the public realm is done using specialised cameras that operate 24/7 and provide valuable real time data that is useful to town centre managers, retailers, event managers, police, and transport planners, all of whom are potential contributors to the cost of the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points to consider</td>
<td>Most retailers compare their sales figures against the previous day, week, month and year and will quite readily give you their plus or minus percentage figure. It may take a bit more persuasion to get their sales figures which are regarded as more confidential. The gross figure for the year will be easier to get than for shorter periods as it is less commercially sensitive. Developing relationships of trust with key retailers by anonymising the data they share with you and by giving back data that they value is worth the investment. Knowing the footfall outside their shop is of value to a retailer who can then work out their conversion rates of how many come in, and how many then spend to help inform their marketing and merchandising. Footfall represents potential customers, not actual customers (see “Retail sales” in the “Economic characteristics” section). A large amount of people walking past a location may not always be linked directly to their intention to go inside, make a purchase, or remain for any length of time. A good example of this is transition places (often referred to as third places) such as train stations or airports. Footfall may also be influenced by weather conditions, time of the day and whether a special event (e.g. farmers market, carnival) has attracted people who would not have come to that location in normal circumstances. Term breaks, road works and parking charging, e.g. ‘Free after 4pm’ can also influence the numbers accessing the town centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Geographical catchment

**Brief description**
Area(s) that people travel from to visit the town centre.

**Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice**

The “Milestone” package offered by Springboard (http://milestoneuk.org/index.htm) is a performance monitoring and benchmarking tool for town and city centres. Developed as a collaborative project between the Association of Town & City Management and Springboard, “Milestone” offers a central source of town/city information with a comprehensive understanding of a centre's performance as well as comparative performance data via benchmarking.

The National Skills Academy for Retail offers an online “Location Model” that allows for localities to be benchmarked and offers training suggestions linked to the results of the assessment (see http://www.nsaforretail.com/are-you-a-retail-destination/location-model/Pages/welcome.aspx). The “Location Model” measures similar elements to those captured by this indicator.

Experian’s GOAD service (http://www.experian.co.uk/goad/goad.html) identifies the most profitable locations for investors and developers to site retail property and regeneration projects. GOAD’s plans and reports cover over 3,000 shopping areas in the UK and Ireland. The following weblink provides an example of a typical Experian GOAD report: http://www.experian.co.uk/assets/goad/brochures/town_centre_shopper_report.pdf

The Economic Development department of your local authority and, if you have one, the Manager of the Shopping Centre in your town centre will have hinterland, travel to work, and catchment data that they should be willing to share with you.

The ESRC has a useful Retail Data website with data useful for this indicator (see http://www.retailresearchdata.com/).

**Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)**

In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:

1. Select one or more times of the year for your geographical catchment survey bearing in mind to impact of Christmas and the two months leading to it. Carry out your surveys preferably both at the weekend during daytime so that you can capture also people who may have been at work during the week, and on a weekday.
2. Consider the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will use in your surveys.
3. On each street covered by your survey, make a note of the street name before you ask people walking down that street the following question: “If you don’t mind, could you give me the postcode of the place you live?” (if the person cannot give you the postcode or does not remember it in full, ask them the name of the area and the town/location it belongs to; if the visitor is from overseas, their country of residence will be enough for this analysis).
4. Write down the postcode or place of residence and repeat with as many people as you can in different locations of the town centre.
5. Add all the answers for each postcode (for each survey location) and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier and for weekday versus weekend.
6. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it.

**Improving overall results and reliability**

The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. If you survey people walking down the high street only, your results may not be representative of the whole town centre, which is why it is advisable to include streets close to the town centre too as they may have a retail/leisure offer that attracts different visitors.

Similarly, if you carry out separate surveys at different times of the day, evening and night, and at different times of year you may find that the places visitors have travelled from change too, which could be a reflection of your town centre's varied offer of retail, services, leisure and attractiveness at different times.

For a richer understanding of your town centre's geographical catchment area, you may want to engage in a more thorough market research survey.

Related questions you may wish to add to this survey are:

1. What was the main purpose of your visit today?
2. What means of transport did you use?
3. How frequently do you visit this town centre?

**Points to consider**

Geographical catchment areas may shrink or grow depending on a range of factors, including the season of the year (e.g. Christmas, summer months or school holidays). Therefore, it is important you record the exact date(s) you chose to do your survey. It is also worth noting any significant improvements or disruptions that may be impacting the catchment e.g. the opening of a new store, commencement or completion of major road or public realm works, refurbishment of the library, a recent positive or negative story in the press, or closing of a major employer.

Geographical catchment data on its own, even if really detailed and based on hundreds or even thousands of high street visitors surveyed, is likely to be of limited use without further research, which may include parameters such as average household income, age profiles and other socio-economic variables for the main postcodes served by the town centre. This socio-economic data can be obtained down to ward level from the Office of National Statistics website http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=People+and+Places.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Mode(s) of transport used by visitors to reach the town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>The Association of Town &amp; City Management Health Check provides indicators linked to this one and can be accessed on a free trial basis for a limited period at <a href="http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/">http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/</a> (Username: tc99 Password: trialpass). London City Councils offer a report on “How and Why people travel to town centres” (see <a href="http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/policylobbying/transport/parkinginlondon/parkingurban.htm">http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/policylobbying/transport/parkinginlondon/parkingurban.htm</a>). The Transport &amp; Highways section of your local authority will have some transport modes data, as well as their projections of how this may change which they may be willing to share with you.</td>
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**Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)**

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<th>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</th>
<th>In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Select one or more times of the year for your access (transport) survey. Bear in mind that Christmas and the two months leading to it will be different from the other ten months of the year. Carry out your surveys both during the week and a weekend during daytime so that you can capture data about the people who work in the town centre as well as those who visit for other reasons.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will use in your surveys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Draw up a list of transport options available to reach your high street (e.g. walking, bicycle, car, motorbike, taxi, bus, train, tram, etc.). You may want to check with your local authority to confirm the actual options available.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. In each location covered by your survey, make a note of the location before you ask people walking along that street the following question: “Could you tell me what mode of transport (including walking) you used for the majority your trip into town today? (ask each person to answer your question by ticking the relevant transport mode from the list you put together in step 3). You may wish to add “Is this the mode of transport you usually use when coming here?” and make a note of their ‘usual’ mode as well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Now ask the following question: “from the list of transport modes I have just shown you are there any transport options you did not know about? If yes, please tick all the ones you were not aware of”.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Tick this box for each person surveyed using a different ink colour so that you do not get the answers to questions 4 and 5 mixed up. Add all the answers for each transport mode and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it. You may want to do the same thing for the answers you obtained to your second question (step 5).</td>
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</table>

**Improving overall results and reliability**

The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Make a note of the weather conditions when you do your survey as a rainy day is likely to have an impact on the way people access the high street. In some town centres, transport options may decrease as the night draws nearer. Therefore, you may want to carry out separate surveys during day time, evening and night time. Furthermore, and to build on this indicator, you may also want to carry out a separate survey of how people go back home from the high street, particularly in the evenings and at night when some public transport options may not be viable any longer due to timetables and visitors may be more reliant on taking a taxi back home.

**Points to consider**

People may use a combination of two or more modes of transport to reach the town centre. For instance, someone living in a village or small town in a rural setting may walk to their nearest train station, take a train to a large city centre (e.g. Birmingham New Street train station) and then board a local bus to reach their destination. In order to simplify data recording and analysis, this indicator does not capture all these modes of transport. Instead, it focuses on the mode of transport used for the majority of the time travelled, which may or may not correspond to the last mode of transport used to reach the town centre. This indicator measures how people reach your town centre but not how they leave it. For instance, night club or theatre goers at night may find their transport options considerably reduced due to schedules, making them more reliant on driving or taking a taxi.
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<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Car parking</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Car parking capacity (public and private) and use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>The Association of Town &amp; City Management (ATCM) Health Check provides indicators linked to this one and can be accessed on a free trial basis for a limited period at <a href="http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/">http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/</a> (Username: tc99 Password: trialpass). The ATCM offers also guidance on how parking can be managed in market towns (see <a href="http://towns.org.uk/files/Market-Towns-Car-Parking-Research-2007.pdf">http://towns.org.uk/files/Market-Towns-Car-Parking-Research-2007.pdf</a>). In addition to this, the British Parking Association (<a href="http://www.britishparking.uk">www.britishparking.uk</a>) represents over 700 organisations from across the entire parking and traffic management sector, including local authorities, manufacturers, car park operators, health authorities, universities, airports, railways, shopping centres, bailiffs, construction companies, learning providers and consultants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</td>
<td>In order to collect data for this indicator you may wish to: 1. Survey your town centre and list all the public car parks, noting which are privately operated (e.g. NCP) and which are local authority run. Make sure you include park-and-ride car parks out of town or at the edge of town. 2. Contact the car park operators including your local authority and request: A. The number of car parking spaces available in each car park, and in the case of local authorities on-street parking spaces. B. The usage figures for each car park – most operators will have a detailed monthly spreadsheet for their own management reporting from which they can share information. Record these numbers and compare them to the same figure 12 months earlier. Make a note of whether the overall number of car parking spaces and their usage has increased or decreased over this time period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving overall results and reliability</td>
<td>Find out if the local authority has supplied you with paid or unpaid car parking spaces available on streets close to the town centre as these may be used informally by some visitors to park closer to the town centre without necessarily using an official (public or private) car park. If you can get more in depth data from your car park operators (those monthly spreadsheets) the patterns of activity they reveal can be very useful. The car park operators, both public and private, have a vested interest in maximising their usage and by sharing data with you, in return they can receive information from you that could inform their management decisions and partnership working with the town centre as a whole. For example if it is quiet on Sundays, they make more money, and drive more activity by dropping the price – in turn more shops may open on Sunday, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points to consider</td>
<td>This indicator is about car parking but not necessarily about visitor satisfaction with it. Rising costs of car parking in and around high streets are having their toll on usage and, in many cases, satisfaction. An in-depth knowledge of the characteristics of your town centre’s geographical catchment area will also provide valuable insights. Car ownership can vary considerably around the UK and will tend to be lower than average for residents in larger cities like London. This can be linked to car parking capacity in or around a town centre. Similarly, this indicator does not capture directly whether a high street or town centre are influenced by other factors such as congestion charges. Usage can change for many reasons but could be influenced by a change from ‘pay &amp; display’ to ‘pay on exit’ which has an effect on dwell time. If a car park in your town centre has changed the payment method, it may impact the figures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
<td>Community spirit</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Local perception of the strength of the bonds that keep the community together in and around the town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>For a good description (linked to data and indicators) of how a sense of social capital and community cohesion can have a positive influence on visitor perceptions, see the “Local services: Happy places” report by the Association of Convenience Store (<a href="http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/">http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/</a>) Community spirit has links also to happiness, though the latter can be more of an individual feeling that is not always related to how close an individual is to those around him/her. The World Database of Happiness (<a href="http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eu/hap_quer/hqi_fp.htm">http://worlddatabaseofhappiness.eu/hap_quer/hqi_fp.htm</a>) offers various happiness surveys and techniques for measuring this. Local authority annual satisfaction surveys may include relevant questions, and some local Volunteer Bureau may have useful information to share.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators) | In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps: 1. Select a time of the year for your survey of community spirit that does not coincide with Christmas or the two months leading to it. Carry out your survey preferably over a weekend during daytime so that you can capture local people who may have been at work during the week. 2. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note of the location(s). 3. Before asking your survey question, find out if the person you are interviewing is ‘a local’ (leave it up to them to establish what the meaning of ‘local’ is). 4. If the person is from the local area, ask them the following questions:  
   - In your opinion, is the community spirit in this town?  
     - Very poor  
     - Poor  
     - Don’t know / prefer not to answer  
     - Good  
     - Very good  
   - Are you involved in any local community groups or organisations?  
     - Yes / No  
  5. Record their answers and move on to the next person you would like to survey. 6. Add all the answers for each choice and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier. 7. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it. |
| Points to consider | Community spirit is based largely on perception and can be influenced considerably by both the individual and collective state of mind of the local residents. Temporary factors (e.g. the closure of a major retailer in the town centre with job losses locally, or the local football team having a particularly good season) can have a substantial impact on community spirit, especially when they were unforeseen. The reason for the second question above is that those involved in some way in local organisations (e.g. Civic Association or voluntary work of some kind) tend to experience a stronger sense of community spirit, so you want to capture people who are not involved as well as those who are. |
| Improving overall results and reliability | The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms (e.g. what is meant by ‘local’ or ‘community spirit’). Avoid surveying people who are likely to give you an answer they know you may be expecting. This may include family and close friends. Avoid doing your survey shortly after a major traumatic event in the area, such as a serious crime. You may want to flesh out this very simple survey to cover other elements of local satisfaction and data collection. Most local authorities undertake local resident satisfaction surveys, and tourism professionals survey visitors. So, you may want to check when and how these are being done so that you can avoid survey overkill and possibly share data results and resources for mutual benefit. |
This theme groups five key performance indicators:

- Retail offer
- Culture and leisure offer
- Events
- Reported crime
- Markets

The overall aim in this theme is to provide an assessment of the actual offer of the town centre and its diversity taking a holistic approach that includes its daytime, evening and night-time economies. This holistic approach does not differentiate here between the public and private sectors as it is interpreted that both contribute to the provision of services, products and an overall experience for town centre visitors to enjoy and keep coming back to. However, this theme does not monitor consumer demand, expectations or their perceptions of the offer provided by the town centre which is covered by the next barometer theme.

**Retail offer.**

This indicator keeps track of the range and variety of retail goods and services offered in the town centre, measured as the change in the number of businesses in each category over a 12-month period. In order to remain competitive, town centres need to ensure they provide a level of offer that matches the demand of their current (or intended) visitors and consumers. This indicator is often linked to footfall and levels of business as well as visitor satisfaction. It can also be used (in conjunction with other indicators) to monitor the balance and relationship between the area’s day-time and night-time/evening economies. In order to achieve this, this indicator takes a wide interpretation of retail offer that includes products (e.g. clothes, food) as well as services (e.g. bank branches, restaurants, cafes). This indicator helps to identify gaps in the retail offer that could be targeted for inward investment or start-up support and is information that potential providers will find valuable. This indicator also provides its users with the means to monitor whether their town centre is becoming too dominated by a single type of retail offer (e.g. pound shops, charity shops, pubs/bars). Outlets with an alcohol license are considered to be “retail” businesses in this indicator. The retail service element of this indicator deliberately ignores leisure elements without a license for the sale of alcohol, as these are dealt with in another indicator (culture and leisure).

**Culture and leisure offer.**

This indicator captures the variety of leisure-related services offered in the town centre, including publicly supported services such as swimming pools and theatres. Interaction with other people, cultural activities and a bit of enjoyment not related to a ‘to do/buy’ list are some of the many reasons why people come to town centres. This indicator captures this characteristic of town centre activity. In fact, the culture and leisure offer can be monitored to establish the extent to which people use a town centre in a functional sense only (e.g. just to shop) or in a wider context (e.g. spend time people watching or going to the cinema).

As in the case of the “retail offer" indicator, there may be a clear distinction here between the day-time, evening and high-time, which merits investigation. This indicator deliberately targets non-alcohol leisure offer as outlets with an alcohol license were counted in the “retail offer” indicator. To some extent, this indicator will allow you to establish how well your town centre caters for non-alcohol related leisure activities, which may be preferred by certain segments of society, including families and pensioners.

**Events.**

This indicator keeps track of the number of events held in the town centre public realm, measured using local authority’s data of event licenses awarded over a 12-month period and those held in town centre venues that have a significant impact on footfall. Events and festivals are a major reason for people to come to town centres. A diverse event offer can be a major source of attraction for visitors as well as local residents, particularly if these events take place throughout the year and are aimed at different audiences (e.g. cultural tourists, business tourists, young people, children, families, ethnic minorities). Events can make a significant contribution to the local economy and foster a stronger sense of community among residents, pride of place, and inclusiveness. Typically, events may range from small carnivals or fairs to major cultural festivals, conferences, or Light Nights* that invite residents and visitors to experience their town centre at night through a diverse offer of comedy, magic, music and other performances.

**Reported crime.**

This indicator monitors the number of reported incidents of crimes in a range of categories in the town centre. In some cases, fear of crime can act as a deterrent for people not to visit a town centre, particularly in the evenings and at night. Yet, as powerful as perceptions can be in influencing people’s behaviour, they are not always directly related to reality. This indicator will allow its users to contrast these perceptions (captured in the “crime and safety perceptions” indicator) with actual reported crime statistics. This can give town centre champions a powerful tool to dispel fears and change perceptions.

**Markets.**

This indicator monitors the existence of regular markets in the town centre. Markets, like events, can be a major motivating factor for people to come to a town centre. The presence of a regular (albeit temporary) traditional market can add diversity to the retail offer of a town centre and can act as a catalyst for other more specialist markets to come to the area, including farmers’ markets, artisan markets, continental markets, Christmas markets, night markets, etc. All this can contribute to the area’s diversity of offer, satisfy a wider range of needs and attract local residents as well as visitors from a growing catchment area.

*Light Nights* is an annual event that takes place in the town centre.
**Retail offer**

**Variety of retail services offer in the town centre, including leisure activities where alcohol may be consumed.**

In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow the steps below. Count at the same time every year - September is recommended - and compare to previous year. Count at three fixed times of day in order to measure and compare the day, evening and late night offer in your town centre.

1. **Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street(s) adjacent to the high street)** and make a note or drawing of the names of the streets / area you will cover in your assessment.
2. **Chose times of the day, evening and night when you can visit the area safely to do your assessment. You will need a fresh sheet for each visit to keep your audit results separate.**
3. **For each retail offer audit you carry out (day-time, evening and night-time), count on each street you visit the total number of outlets and the number of outlets for each of the categories shown below (use your own judgement with regards to which categories apply best to each outlet you find):**

   - Food shops (fresh food)
   - Food shops (canned or frozen)
   - Newsagent
   - Restaurants (with mainly sit-in capacity and with alcohol license)
   - Cafes (with alcohol license)
   - Pubs/bars
   - Night clubs and comedy clubs (with alcohol license)
   - Clothing/fashion/shoe shops
   - Sports shops
   - Cash for clothes shops
   - Banks/building societies
   - Nail bars, hair and beauty salons
   - Shops with a collection service for goods ordered on the Internet (Click & Collect)
   - Music shops (DVDs, CDs, games)
   - Specialist music shops (mainly musical instruments)
   - Card & Wrap shops
   - Stationery, Office & Art / Craft Supply Shops
   - Florist, Plants & Gardening Supplies
   - Bookshops
   - Gift shops
   - Toy Shops
   - Computer/electronics/phone shops
   - Hardware/DIY shops
   - Furniture & Home Interiors incl Soft Furnishings and Cook Shops
   - Antique shops
   - Jewellers & Accessories incl handbags
   - Travel Services & Goods incl luggage
   - Bicycle & Bicycle Repair Shops
   - Specialist deli cafes/shops
   - Pound (incl. 99p) shops
   - Betting shops
   - Pawn shops incl ‘Cash for Gold’
   - Other specialist outlets (please state)

   If a single outlet ticks more than one box of the categories shown above, then tick all the categories it covers.

4. **Record the number of outlets you have found for each category on each street / area audited and overall for the town centre.**
5. **Compare these values with your audit results 12 months earlier and establish if any of the categories have increased or decreased.**

**Improving overall results and reliability**

Although you may choose to focus your audit of retail offer on a single street, this may not give you a very representative snapshot of the actual retail offer of your whole town centre. Therefore, the wider the area you cover in your assessment and the more specific your recorded results are (e.g. indicator result per individual street / area in addition to the overall results for your whole town centre, the more robust and credible your results will be.

In addition, you may also want to write down your own observations, including how easy it was for you as a researcher to access or find out about the offer available in the outlets included in your analysis as this is information that strategic decision-makers may consider in conjunction with other indicators.

Also, don’t forget about buildings on the high street or close to it (e.g. shopping centres and department stores), which may include a large variety of retailers.

**Points to consider**

Ideally, it would be best if this indicator is measured around September. The reason for this is that in most locations retail outlet vacancy rates will tend to be at their highest at this time of the year as the effect of Christmas and Easter sales begins to wear off. Thus, the time of the year when this indicator is measured can have a considerable influence on the result and, hence, future strategic decision-making.

Similarly, the balance of retail offer during daytime and evening or night time is very relevant too as the area may attract (or wish to attract) more visitors during the evening or night due to its diverse offer of attractive bars, restaurants and pubs.

Outlets with an alcohol license are considered to be “retail” businesses in this indicator. The retail service element of this indicator deliberately ignores leisure elements without a license for the sale of alcohol, as these are dealt with in another indicator (leisure and culture). Furthermore, by assigning this distinction the results obtained in this indicator are less likely to vary from one person to another as it will be necessary for the person(s) carrying out the street(s) audit for this indicator to use their own judgement.

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### Indicator name
**Culture and leisure offer**

### Brief description
Variety of leisure-related services offer in town centre.

### Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice
Visit England ([www.visitengland.org](http://www.visitengland.org)) has overall information related to this indicator from a tourism perspective. The following website provides information about the importance of tourism and how to put together a visitor survey: [http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/culture-tourism-and-sport/-/journal_content/56/10171/351419/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/culture-tourism-and-sport/-/journal_content/56/10171/351419/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)


Experian data ([http://www.experian.co.uk/business-strategies/data.html](http://www.experian.co.uk/business-strategies/data.html)) also provide indicators and data related to leisure as part of their Experian Mosaic commercial package.

### Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)
In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps: (counted in September and compared to previous year, establish number of fixed leisure outlets that offer a number of services during daytime, evening and night-time economy).

1. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your assessment.
2. Choose times of the day, evening and night when you can visit the area safely to do your assessment. You will need a fresh sheet for each visit to keep your audit results separate.
3. For each leisure offer audit you carry out (day-time, evening and night-time), count on each street you visit the number of outlets for each of the categories shown below (use your own judgement with regards to which single category applies best to each outlet you find):
   - Museums
   - Art galleries
   - Arts Centres
   - Take-away only and fast food restaurants
   - Cafés (without alcohol license)
   - Swimming pools
   - Gyms
   - Cinemas
   - Theatres
   - Community halls
   - Parks/gardens
   - Games arcades (incl. bingo halls)
   - Other specialist outlets (please state)

   If a single outlet ticks more than one of the categories shown above, then tick all the categories it covers.
4. Record the number of outlets you have found for each category on each street audited.
5. Compare these values with your audit results 12 months earlier and establish if any of the categories have increased or decreased.

### Improving overall results and reliability
Although you may focus your audit of leisure offer on a single street, this may not give you a very representative snapshot of the actual leisure offer of your whole town centre. Therefore, the wider the area you cover in your assessment and the more specific your recorded results are (e.g. indicator result per individual street rather than overall results for your whole town centre), the more robust and credible your results will be.

Also, don’t forget about buildings on the high street or close to it (e.g. shopping centres), which may include leisure outlets. In addition you may also want to write down your own observations, including how easy it was for you as a researcher to access or find out about the outlets included in your survey area(s) as this is information that strategic decision-makers may consider in conjunction with other indicators.

### Points to consider
As in the case of the “retail offer” indicator, it is important that this indicator is measured around September for similar reasons.

The balance of leisure offer during daytime and evening or night-time is very relevant too as the area may attract more visitors during the day time due to its diverse cultural offer, which may include museums, arts and crafts workshops, etc.

This indicator deliberately targets non-alcohol leisure offer as outlets with an alcohol license were counted in the “retail offer” indicator.

To some extent, this indicator will allow you to establish how well your town centre caters for non-alcohol related leisure activities, which may be preferred by certain segments of society, including families and pensioners.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Number of events (other than markets) that attract more than 500 participants / spectators in one 24 hour period held in the town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>Various local authorities and departments, particularly tourism and major venues within the town centre. For more information on how events can transform town centres and engage communities, see <a href="http://www.100ways.org.uk/light-night.html">http://www.100ways.org.uk/light-night.html</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators) | 1. In order to collect data for this indicator, you will need to find out from your local authority licensing section the number of town centre event and festival licenses issued over the last 12 months.  
2. Determine how many days each event covered and add up the number of event days.  
3. Investigate and list any significant events that happen in your town centre within venues where separate licences are not required for each event. For instance, your town may host one or more major conference or festival that fill the hotels and raise footfall. Again, count the number of events and event days.  
Once you have these numbers, compare them to the previous year’s value and establish whether the number of licensed events and event days has increased or decreased. |
| Improving overall results and reliability | You may want to find out from your local authority and / or the individual event organisers what types of events were licensed and what their target audience was, if this information is available. Most event organisers will be able to tell you roughly how many people attended / participated and geographically where they came from. This additional information would provide you with a much richer picture of your high street or town centre’s current diversity of offer is on this front.  
Don’t be tempted to include every little jumble sale and fun run – only include events of some scale (minimum 500 people) and a good portion of the day / night with an impact on town centre footfall.  
As local authority budgets reduce due to wider financial pressures, the number of licensed events supported with public funds could decrease over time. Some of them may be increasingly sponsored with a combination of private and public funds or entirely privately. This is a further level of research you may want to engage in to add depth to the value of this indicator. |
| Points to consider | The impact of events has been shown to be difficult to establish and often short-lived. Similarly, unless events are embedded in a wider strategy for a high street or town centre, their influence can be small or even erratic at best.  
Large scale events such as festivals can comprise a number of overlapping or smaller events. If these take place at the same time, their impact may be different to what it could have been if they had each been stand-alone events. If these are annual events ensure you measure them the same way each year. |
### Annex D:

#### indicators toolkit: diversity and vitality of place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Reported crime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Number of reported incidents of crime in the town centre.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using the Police statistics website <a href="http://www.police.uk/">http://www.police.uk/</a>, enter a postcode, town or street name to get street-level maps and data related to reported crime in that area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn more about how to use crime figures and how they are gathered go to <a href="http://www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator/?force=derbyshire&amp;crime=all-crime">http://www.hmic.gov.uk/crime-and-policing-comparator/?force=derbyshire&amp;crime=all-crime</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to your local Constabulary and Crime Reduction Partnership who may also be able to provide both current and historic figures by category of crime as well as location.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to collect data for this indicator, you will need to find out from your local police authority the number of reported incidents of crime in the town centre over the last 12 months in a range of categories as well as an overall figure. These figures are likely to include reported incidents of:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• violence – with and without injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>• theft of and from vehicles (indicates how safe your car parks are)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• anti-social behaviour</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• shop-lifting but not internal shop theft or fraud</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• burglary – domestic (if town centre residents) and non-domestic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• criminal damage &amp; arson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• alcohol and drug related crimes including public disorder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• race and hate related crimes.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You may also wish to ask for the figures on resolution of crimes as a proportion of those reported.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once you have these numbers, compare them to the previous year’s value and establish whether the number of reported incidents of crime overall and by category has increased or decreased. In many cases the Police will be able to give you historic as well as current figures so that you can chart trends.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improving overall results and reliability</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To gain a more in-depth understanding of your town centre’s 12-monthly reported crime figures, you may want to explore an analysis of police statistics by day of the week, time of the day (e.g. morning versus evening or night time) and category (e.g. vandalism, anti-social behaviour, shop-lifting, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The methods and categories of recorded crimes have changed over the years and become increasingly sophisticated. To inform local actions and interventions more detailed figures are vital.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points to consider</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An overall reported crime figure for 12 months with no further insights may be of limited value.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported crime can vary depending on the policies of individual businesses and local culture. Similarly, actual versus reported crime can vary considerably from one place to another.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition, crime can often be time and place specific. For instance, a considerable number of reported crime incidents may take place in a specific location in or close to the town centre even if the rest of the town centre remains virtually unaffected by this. Similarly, reported crime related to alcohol consumption may vary widely from a Saturday night to a mid-week night.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime figures for this indicator should not include internal shop theft (normally carried out by employees of that retail business) or fraud but should include other business related crime such as shoplifting and assault of retail staff by members of the public.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator name</td>
<td>Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Existence of a regular market in the town centre, including indoor market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>The National Market Trade Federation has a website (<a href="http://www.nmtf.co.uk/markets.php">http://www.nmtf.co.uk/markets.php</a>) with an interactive map that allows for searches of markets by keyword, phrase or region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</td>
<td>In order to collect data for this indicator, you can either use your knowledge of your town centre to provide an answer (&quot;yes&quot; or &quot;no&quot;) or contact your local authority to establish whether there are any licensed markets operating in your town centre and whether they take place on a regular (weekly/monthly) basis. You may also wish to categorise the retail offer (see Retail Offer above) that this adds to your town to gain a broader picture of the goods and services available in your town, even if some of them are only part time e.g. 2 days a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving overall results and reliability</td>
<td>To gain a more in-depth understanding of your town centre’s diversity of markets offer, you may want to find out from your local authority how many licensed markets operate in your town centre every year, what they are and how they contribute to the town centre’s strategy for retail offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points to consider</td>
<td>This indicator includes only regular (weekly or monthly) licensed markets. It does not include other more specialist markets (e.g. artisan market), which often take place on a monthly or yearly (e.g. Christmas market) basis. This indicator does not discriminate either between regular fresh food markets and clothes/accessories markets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This theme groups five key performance indicators:

- Business confidence
- Town centre visitor satisfaction with retail offer
- Visitor experience satisfaction
- Attractiveness
- Crime and safety perception

The overall aim in this theme is to provide users with a glimpse into an issue that can make or break a town centre on its own, and can be one of the most challenging things to change - perceptions. This theme effectively tests the extent to which the town centre’s overall offer - in a holistic sense, anyway - satisfies the expectations, wants and needs of its stakeholders, focusing primarily on businesses, visitors and local residents. If, in spite of a town centre’s best efforts to match this demand, perceptions remain negative, the indicators presented in this theme will allow users to explore specific issues further. By gaining a better understanding of these perceptions, strategies for changing them for the better can be developed in partnership with stakeholders. Through this process, the developing of a relationship with businesses, visitors and residents can be grounded in reality, shared fate, and mutual trust.

**Business confidence.**

This indicator monitors changes in the level of business confidence among businesses operating in the town centre. Business confidence can be as much about perceptions and fear of future developments in the economy as actual turnover and profit margins. Business confidence has been measured in the past on the basis of whether business turnover (sales) was likely to increase or decrease. The perception of business confidence captured by this indicator focuses on expected profitability (not turnover) over the next 12 months.

**Town centre visitor satisfaction with retail offer.**

This indicator keeps track of changes in visitors’ satisfaction levels with their town centre retail and services offered, but not public services. Visitor in this context include local residents and their satisfaction with the overall retail offer available on a high street as well as other services (e.g. cafes, banks, restaurants) not provided by the public sector. This is a key measure of how well a high street meets consumer demand and a key area of strategic importance to high street performance. This indicator can reveal the ‘leakage’ of local shopping to other locations, although not with any great depth, which would require more sophisticated market research.

**Visitor experience satisfaction.**

This indicator complements the “town centre visitor offer” indicator by monitoring visitors’ satisfaction with the town centre experience but not specifically with retail offer. Even if visitors and local residents are satisfied with the range of goods and services available in the town centre’s retail, cultural and leisure offer, their experience when visiting involves a much broader range of factors. In order to encourage people to linger longer, spend more and return they need to have an overall positive experience. Overall cleanliness, signage, public toilet arrangements, good lighting after dark, and ease of movement around the public realm amongst other factors have both a direct and subliminal impact on how a visitor feels about a place. This indicator helps to monitor satisfaction levels with these services.

**Attractiveness.**

This indicator monitors visitors’ perceptions of the town centre’s overall level of place attractiveness taking a holistic view of the town centre as a place, which includes retail but is not limited to it. Attractiveness can be a very subjective perception. Other indicators (e.g. “high street visitor offer” and “visitor satisfaction”) suggested here attempt to measure more functional aspects of the high street. Instead, this indicator attempts to establish how much people actually like the town centre as a place to spend time.

**Crime and safety perception.**

This indicator monitors changes in businesses’ and visitors’ perception of crime and safety in the town centre. The link between perception and reality is not always a straightforward one to assess. In some areas, reported crime may be low and yet public perception really negative, particularly among people who are not local to that area. It is not uncommon for a place to have a reputation as dangerous or violent, based on a high profile incident or period a good few years ago, which is no longer relevant in fact but remains in the collective ‘psyche’. When used in conjunction with the “reported crime” indicator outlined above, this indicator provides a meaningful comparison of facts versus sentiment.
## Indicator name

### Business confidence

**Brief description**

Measure of business confidence over next 12 months.

**Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice**

The Association of Town & City Management (ATCM) Health Check provides indicators linked to this one and can be accessed on a free trial basis for a limited period at [http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/](http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/) (Username: tc99 Password: trialpass).

For an example of a business confidence survey published by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), see [http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1168756/cbi_economic_challenges_facing_british_business.pdf](http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1168756/cbi_economic_challenges_facing_british_business.pdf)

Local Chambers of Commerce may undertake local business surveys that you can get hold of, or add a specific question to, although their area may be wider than you need and want.

### Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)

In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:

1. Select a time of the year for your business confidence survey that does not coincide with Christmas or the two months leading to it, nor January when confidence tends to be low. Ideally, try to do your survey in September.
2. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your survey and list the businesses to be approached – not just retail businesses.
3. On each street covered by your survey, make a note of the street name before you ask owners or managers the following questions:

   “On balance, what do you think your business’ profitability be 12 months from now?” (ask each business owner/manager to choose one of the options below)
   
   1. Considerably lower
   2. Marginally lower
   3. No change
   4. Marginally higher
   5. Considerably higher

4. For each street you have done your business survey on, add all the answers for each category and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier.
5. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it.

### Improving overall results and reliability

The more businesses you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms (e.g. what is meant by “business confidence”). Ideally, you will want to talk to the person that manages the finances of the business and sets business strategy. In most cases, this will be the owner or manager that runs the business on behalf of the owner. Avoid doing your survey shortly after a major traumatic event in the area, such as a serious crime or major closure.

If you want to explore this area further, you might consider adding questions about their expectation of staffing levels (increase, decrease, stay the same) and any expansion or contraction plans they may have for the next twelve months.

In order to improve the richness of your understanding of business confidence on your high street, you may want to categorise the businesses by day time, evening and night time operators.

### Points to consider

This indicator can be influenced considerably by collective local sentiment. Studies have shown that even under similar social and economic circumstances across a whole region, business sentiment can vary considerably from one location to another, even if they are in relative proximity. On a shorter term basis, business confidence - particularly in retail - can also be influenced by how businesses have performed during key seasonal events such as Christmas and Easter or whether a summer has been unseasonably wet.

Your ability to get a straight (or meaningful) answer from businesses where you are not able to talk directly to the owner (e.g. large chains) may limit somewhat the robustness of this indicator.
## Town centre visitor satisfaction with retail offer

**Brief description**
Visitors’ satisfaction with town centre retail offer.

**Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice**
The National Skills Academy for Retail offers an online “Location Model” that allows for localities to be benchmarked and offers training suggestions linked to the results of the assessment (see [http://www.nsaforretail.com/are-you-a-retail-destination/location-model/Pages/welcome.aspx](http://www.nsaforretail.com/are-you-a-retail-destination/location-model/Pages/welcome.aspx)). The “Location Model” measures similar elements to those captured by this indicator.

For a good description (linked to data and indicators) of factors influencing visitor satisfaction with facilities and amenities, see the “Local services: Happy places” report by the Association of Convenience Stores ([http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/](http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/)).


**Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)**

In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:

1. Select a time of the year for your high street visitor offer survey that does not coincide with Christmas or the two months leading to it. Ideally, try to do your survey in September.
2. Choose a range of times and days to undertake your survey so as to catch the widest range of respondents.
3. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your survey.
4. On each street covered by your survey, make a note of the street name before you ask passers-by the following questions:
   - “Could you tell me to what extent you agree with this statement, please?” – “This street offers me all the services (e.g. retail offer, cafes/restaurants, pubs, night clubs, theatre) I want” (ask each person to choose from one of the options shown below)
     - 1. Strongly disagree
     - 2. Disagree
     - 3. Neither agree nor disagree
     - 4. Agree
     - 5. Strongly agree
5. For each street you have done your visitor offer survey on, add all the answers for each category and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier and for the other areas surveyed.
6. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it.

**Improving overall results and reliability**
The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms. Ideally, it would be good if you could separate clearly responses from local residents from those gathered among visitors from further afield. This may be easier if you combine this survey with the “geographical catchment” survey detailed above in the “people & footfall” section.

Avoid doing your survey shortly after a major traumatic event in the area, such as a serious crime.

In order to improve the richness of your understanding of the town centre’s visitor offer, you may want to carry out separate day time, evening and night time surveys or carry out a full-scale market research survey separately.

Additional questions regarding satisfaction with other aspects of the visitor experience e.g. cleanliness and perceptions of safety are covered in the following pages – see “visitor experience satisfaction” and “crime and safety perception”.

**Points to consider**

This indicator measures visitor satisfaction with the town centre’s existing offer. If in the 12 months since your last survey the location has been subject to major revitalisation, or lost a key attractor e.g. closure of a cinema, this survey will help to measure the impact of these changes.

Satisfaction with current offer is not necessarily an indicator of consumer needs and wants, though significant levels of dissatisfaction may be indicative of the fact that there is a gap in consumer demand to be filled. More in depth information would require more research survey questions and potentially some comparative and gap analysis work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Visitor experience satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Visitors’ satisfaction with town centre (but not with retail and leisure offer).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>Woodley town centre publish their town survey online (see <a href="http://www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk/WoodleyTCSurvey.pdf">http://www.woodleytowncentre.co.uk/WoodleyTCSurvey.pdf</a>). For a good description (linked to data and indicators) of visitor satisfaction with town centre appearance, see the “Local services: Happy places” report by the Association of Convenience Stores (<a href="http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/">http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/</a>). For a report by Visit England on understanding the visitor experience, see <a href="http://www.visitengland.org/Images/Visitor%20Satisfaction%202009-10%20Results_tcm30-25304.pdf">http://www.visitengland.org/Images/Visitor%20Satisfaction%202009-10%20Results_tcm30-25304.pdf</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators) | In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:  
1. Select a time of the year for your high street visitor offer survey that does not coincide with Christmas or the two months leading to it. Ideally, try to do your survey in September.  
2. Do your survey at several different times and days over the course of a week so that you can capture people who work normal office hours as well as leisure visitors.  
3. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your survey.  
4. Ask passers-by the following question:  
   “On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being “appalling” and 10 being “excellent”), other than the shops themselves, how would you rate this location as a place to visit?”  
5. Add all the scores and divide them by the number of people you surveyed to obtain an average score for each survey location and town centre as a whole.  
6. Compare the average satisfaction scores with the ones you got 12 months earlier. Has it increased or decreased? |
<p>| Improving overall results and reliability | The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms. Ideally, it would be good if you could separate clearly responses from local residents from those gathered among visitors from further afield. Avoid doing your survey shortly after a major event or festival when streets could be littered with rubbish. If people offer additional comments or observations make a note of them but try not to get drawn too deeply into conversation so that you can move on to the next potential survey respondent. In order to improve the richness of your understanding of town centre visitor satisfaction, you may want to carry out separate day time, evening and night time surveys or carry out a separate full-scale market research survey. |
| Points to consider | Local residents tend to be more critical of their town centre than visitors, so it is worth separating survey data for this indicator between visitors and local residents if you can. Similarly, issues such as signage tend to be less important for local residents than visitors, particularly first time visitors. In some town centres, arrangements have been made between town centre partnerships and pubs and restaurants for free toilet availability to all visitors (not just customers) so as to eliminate the need for publicly maintained toilets. You will need to be aware of this type of special arrangements before you do your survey. The weather and time of year can impact results for this indicator, e.g. if you survey on a sunny summer day when the flower beds are in full bloom you are more likely to get positive responses than on a grey damp afternoon when dusk arrives early. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Attractiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brief description</strong></td>
<td>Visitors' perception of overall attractiveness of town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</strong></td>
<td>The Association of Town &amp; City Management (ATCM) Health Check provides indicators linked to this one and can be accessed on a free trial basis for a limited period at <a href="http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/">http://www.towncentrehealthcheck.org.uk/</a> (Username: tc99 Password: trialpass). The National Skills Academy for Retail offers an online “Location Model” that allows for localities to be benchmarked and offers training suggestions linked to the results of the assessment (see <a href="http://www.nsaforretail.com/are-you-a-retail-destination/location-model/Pages/welcome.aspx">http://www.nsaforretail.com/are-you-a-retail-destination/location-model/Pages/welcome.aspx</a>). The “Location Model” measures similar elements to those captured by this indicator. For a good description (linked to data and indicators) of factors influencing visitor satisfaction town centre appearance, cleanliness and other perceptions, see the “Local services: Happy places” report by the Association of Convenience Stores (<a href="http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/">http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/</a>).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)** | In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps:  
1. Select a time of the year for your high street visitor offer survey that does not coincide with the run up to Christmas, Britain in Bloom or a major event. Ideally, try to do your survey in September.  
2. Do your survey at several different times and days over the course of a week so that you can capture people who work normal office hours as well as leisure visitors.  
3. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your survey.  
4. Ask passers-by the following question:  
   “On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being “appalling” and 10 being “excellent”), how would you rate the general vibe and feel of this town centre?”  
5. Add all the scores and divide them by the number of people you surveyed to obtain an average score for the whole town centre. Once you have done this, compare the average satisfaction score for the town centre with the one you got 12 months earlier.
   Has it increased or decreased?  
The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms, including what is meant by “attractiveness”. Ideally, it would be good if you could separate clearly responses from local residents from those gathered among visitors from further afield.  
Avoid doing your survey shortly after a major event or festival when streets could be littered with rubbish. Similarly, avoid times of the year when the high street may have been decorated with Christmas lights or for the Britain in Bloom competition.  
If you have time, you could ask “What one thing would improve the attractiveness of this town centre to you as a visitor?” or ‘In your opinion, what is the single best thing, and single worst thing about this town centre?’  
In order to improve the richness of your understanding of attractiveness, you may want to carry out separate day time, evening and night time surveys or carry out a separate full-scale market research survey. |
<p>| <strong>Points to consider</strong> | Attractiveness is very subjective and can be rather ephemeral. Special events (e.g. Christmas lights, temporary public art) can bias survey respondents’ answers. Similarly, the time of day when the survey is done (e.g. straight after a market or event, when rubbish may not have been collected yet from the streets) can have a negative effect on survey results. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Crime and safety perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Businesses’ and visitors’ perception of crime and safety in the town centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice</td>
<td>For a good description (linked to data and indicators) of factors influencing perceptions of crime and safety in town centres, see the “Local services: Happy places” report by the Association of Convenience Stores (<a href="http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/">http://www.acs.org.uk/en/research/local-services-happy-places/</a>) The following questionnaire and survey about perceptions of crime and safety in Lancashire is quite useful (particularly question 15 on page 7): <a href="http://www5.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/consultation/responses/response.asp?ID=167">http://www5.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/consultation/responses/response.asp?ID=167</a> The Annual London Survey for 2011 offers good examples of crime and safety perception questions (see particularly questions 12, 13 and 14 on pages 9, 10 and 11) related to this indicator: <a href="http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annual-London-Survey-Toplines-2011_2.pdf">http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Annual-London-Survey-Toplines-2011_2.pdf</a> The local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership may offer further guidance and assistance related to this indicator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</td>
<td>In order to collect data for this indicator, you may want to follow these steps: 1. Select a time of the year for your high street visitor offer survey that does not coincide with the run up to Christmas, Britain in Bloom or a major event. Ideally, try to do your survey in September. 2. Do your survey at several different times and days over the course of a week so that you can capture people who work normal office hours as well as leisure visitors. 3. Select the area you are going to gather the data on (e.g. high street, whole town centre, specific street adjacent to the high street) and make a note (or drawing) of the locations you will cover in your survey. 4. Ask business owners/managers and their staff as well as members of the general public the following question: “Could you please tell me to what extent you agree with this statement?” – “I feel safe in this town centre” (ask each person to choose from one of the options shown below) (This is just a snapshot so capturing the business personnel who happen to be available at the time of the survey should be sufficient. Do try to note these separately from the public as they may reveal different perceptions) 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree 5. For each location of the town centre you have done your crime and safety perception survey on, add all the answers for each category and compare them to the answers you got 12 months earlier. 6. In your 12-monthly comparison, find out if any of the categories have increased or decreased and make a note of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving overall results and reliability</td>
<td>The more people you survey, the more reliable your results are likely to be. Try not to influence people’s answers by explaining any terms, including what is meant by “safe”. Ideally, it would be good to separate clearly responses from local residents from those gathered among visitors from further afield, and business respondents from the general public. If you were able to break down the actual crime figures you gathered in the Diversity &amp; Vitality section, you may be able to put these two indicators together to see the extent, location by location, to which perceptions match reality. In order to improve the richness of your understanding of crime and safety perceptions, you may want to carry out separate day time, evening and night time surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points to consider</td>
<td>Perceptions of crime can vary significantly depending on circumstances and past experience. They may be influenced also by recent events, including serious crime incidents in or near the town centre or if individual respondents have been victims of crime.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This theme groups five key performance indicators:

- Retail sales
- Partnership working
- Charity shops
- Vacant retail units
- Evening/night time economy

The overall aim in this theme is to provide users with an assessment of static and dynamic elements linked to the economic performance of a town centre. Some of the more ‘static’ elements, which in turn may influence perceptions, too, will include changes in the number of charity shops or vacant retail units. On the other hand, more ‘dynamic’ elements such as evidence of partnership working or active management of the evening economy offer insights into the town centre’s willingness to pull together and adopt a purposeful way forward to make it a more sustainably prosperous place regardless of the level of resources at its disposal.

**Retail sales.**
This indicator tracks changes in retail sales in the town centre taking the sum of all the businesses willing to volunteer this data. A town centre may be very successful at attracting visitors and local residents. However, ultimately, if it is to survive financially, it needs to translate footfall into actual consumer spending. Having established the number of people visiting a town centre using the “footfall” indicator, this indicator closes the loop by establishing consumer spending in the same locations where “footfall” was measured.

**Partnership working.**
This indicator monitors evidence of a partnership approach to developing and managing the town centre at a number of levels that include the daytime, evening and night-time economies. The management and development of town centres does not rely solely on the resources of local authorities. A large array of partnership formats exists, which range from informal local partnerships of retailers and concerned citizens, to sophisticated private sector-led partnerships including Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). In fact, working in partnership with other organisations often allows local authorities and public service providers to deliver their services more effectively and to achieve more robust strategic decision-making. Equally, for businesses operating in the town centre, their trading environment does not stop at their front door – the conditions in and around the town centre have a direct impact on their business and their staff. So, the town centre has a direct impact on both their business and their staff. As a result of this, both business and public sector organisations have a vested interest in working with each other and other local stakeholders including residents and third sector enterprises. This indicator allows users to monitor the extent to which partnership working has been implemented in a town centre to improve its performance.

**Charity shops.**
This indicator monitors yearly changes in the number of charity shops in a town centre. Over the last fifteen years, the proliferation of charity shops in town centres may have been interpreted in certain circles as a sign of decline. On the other hand, charity shops fill an important gap in the retail offer of any town centre, not just in towns and cities with more modest income catchment areas and/or ageing demographics. Charity shops provide a valuable re-use and re-cycling function reducing the volume of waste going to landfill and bring in valuable income for worthy causes.

Regardless of how the existence of charity shops is interpreted, their growth or decline impacts on perceptions and forms an important element in the monitoring of the economic performance of any town centre. This indicator alone can act as a barometer for the impact of strategic decisions on the daytime economy of a town centre.

**Vacant retail units.**
This indicator monitors changes in a town centre’s vacant retail units. An increase in vacant retail units in town centres has traditionally been linked to economic decline both locally and nationally. On the other hand, this could also be interpreted as a temporary opportunity for the town centre to re-balance strategically its visitor offer, and a chance for culture and leisure-related outlets and community services to gain more of a foothold in the town centre. Regardless of how vacant retail units are interpreted, their growth or decline forms an important element in the monitoring of the economic performance of any town centre.

**Evening/night time economy.**
This indicator monitors evidence of active management of the evening and night time economies in the town centre. The majority of town and city centres (or at least parts of them) do not go to sleep after the last shop closes for the day. They often have evening and night time economies too, which may vary in size and character from one location to another. In some areas, this part of the economy forms a crucial part of the service offer. In many cases, the town centre attracts a completely different demographic of customer with different needs and expectations ‘after dark’ to those who visit the high street during day time. It is also worth distinguishing between the evening consumer (5-8 pm often referred to as the ‘shoulder period’) and late night, which again can have quite different demographics. Evidence is building to support the collective and active management of town centres after dark to increase visitor confidence, improve perceptions, prevent crime and disorder, and provide a healthy trading environment for a range of businesses and providers who operate at night. This indicator enables users to monitor how effectively the evening and night time economies are managed (if they are managed at all) in a town centre.
## Retail sales

### Brief description
Retail sales in town centre.

### Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice
The British Retail Consortium ([http://www.brc.org.uk](http://www.brc.org.uk)) offers good resources related to this indicator. An example of this is the BRC-KPMG Retail Sales Monitor. Similarly, the Association of Convenience Stores ([http://www.acs.org.uk/](http://www.acs.org.uk/)) also has excellent resources and research related to this indicator.

### Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)
The term “retail” is understood here in its widest possible definition and should include not just shops selling products but also services as well as leisure outlets such as restaurants and pubs.

When collecting data for this indicator, it is important that you have familiarised yourself with the data collection methodology for the “footfall” indicator as both indicators tend to be very closely related.

For each (retail outlet) location where you have measured “footfall”, ask the owner/manager of that retail outlet to provide you with their:
- gross sales figure (also known as business turnover)
- percentage up or down against the same period the previous year

You are also likely to need to promise that the figures per retailer are kept confidential and only shared in an anonymised collective format.

Write down the sales figures for each outlet and collate the figures together to get a picture of how retail sales are holding up in your town centre.

### Improving overall results and reliability
As with data for the “footfall” indicator, the more often you do your measurements and the greater the number of locations, the better your town centre retail sales data will be. These can vary considerably according to location and season of the year (e.g. Christmas versus July-August).

In order to improve the richness of your understanding of retail sales, you may want to gather and categorise data for this indicator by different types of outlets (shops, restaurants, pubs) and using separate day time, evening and night time surveys.

If you develop relationships of trust with some of your retailers they may be willing to share their average transaction value and number of transactions with you to add further depth to your data.

### Points to consider
An increasing number of retail outlets are beginning to offer free town centre outlet collection services for goods purchased online. Unless this spending can be separated from in-store sales, there is a risk that a town centre could appear to be performing really well with this indicator but actually be failing to encourage visitors to utilise other town centre services (incl. leisure and events). This could lead some town centres to become mere transition ‘third places’ with a purely functional purpose. However, part of the rationale of the ‘click & collect services is to draw the consumer into the bricks and mortar store and town centre where they can make further purchases.
## Annex F: Economic Characteristics

**indicators toolkit:**

### Economic toolkit:

#### Indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Partnership working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Evidence of a partnership approach to managing the town centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice:

The Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) has published a number of resources useful for setting up partnerships from scratch (see [http://www.atcm.org/mfiles/files/1193-HowToEstablishATownTeam.pdf](http://www.atcm.org/mfiles/files/1193-HowToEstablishATownTeam.pdf)) and operating them. For more information on Town Teams, see [http://www.townteams.org/](http://www.townteams.org/)

The first section of “100 Ways to Help the High Street”, “Working Together” is a good place to start for guidance. [www.100ways.org.uk](http://www.100ways.org.uk)

For an overview of different types of place management partnership models that exist in different European countries, see:


#### Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators):

If you are undertaking a performance measurement exercise for your town, you will probably already be at least partially familiar with the partnership and management arrangements for the town centre in question.

If not, you may want to start by contacting the economic development section of your local authority to find out what (if any) partnerships exist for the management of the daytime economy in your town centre. Ideally there will be one overarching dominant partnership for the town centre. However, there may be more than one, in which case you need to explore what the different and interrelated roles are.

Make a make of no more than three partnership organisations (if there is one main one concentrate on that), and make an appointment with the Chair of each. Find out and note:

1. Whether they are led by the public sector, private sector, or an informal association (third sector).
2. How many members each partnership has.
3. Who the members represent e.g. business, government, local residents, as a proportion of the overall membership.
4. Their formal legal status i.e.; has a constitution, or a Community Interest Company (CIC), Company Limited by Guarantee, and so on.
5. The gross annual budget at their disposal without additional fundraising.
6. Any operational responsibilities e.g. delivering place branding and marketing services for the town as a destination, or managing street trading on behalf of the local authority.

Compare your assessment to that done 12 months earlier.

- Do the town centre partnerships still exist?
- Has their structure evolved?
- Have they grown or shrunk?
- Have their budgets increased, decreased or stayed the same?
- Have their responsibilities expanded, contracted or stayed the same?

#### Improving overall results and reliability:

Depending on local circumstances, if there is more than one partnership, the relationship between them is important to explore and develop, although too intangible to measure as a performance indicator.

It may also be useful to make a note of whether there is a single point of contact (an individual or team of individuals) that local residents, businesses, visitors, and potential investors can contact directly with queries related to the management of the town centre.

Town centre partnerships may sometimes start as informal arrangements or informal associations (e.g. some new Town Teams and Portas Pilots) with limited resources. Given that local authorities may sometimes have little (if any) involvement with such embryonic partnerships, your local knowledge and relationships with retailers, trader and resident associations and the voluntary sector is invaluable.

#### Points to consider:

It is worth bearing in mind the difference between a voluntary town centre partnership (sometimes called a town team) and a town centre management organisation. The former may deliver projects and initiatives to improve and enhance the town, whilst the latter also has operational management powers and responsibilities and the relevant human and financial resources to do so.

Throughout history we can see evidence of the value and effectiveness of collaborative inclusive partnership working for maximum collective benefit. Town and city centres are complex multi-use dynamic places that require mature focussed management that engages and involves representatives of the key stakeholders. It is generally accepted that a partnership approach to projects through a pooling of experience and resources from different organisations is conducive to more effective solutions. In the absence of a consistent method of measuring town centre performance, the direct link between actively managed partnership-led town centres and high street performance remains an area of on-going research. As a result of this, and the complexity of factors involved, proof beyond any reasonable doubt that town centre management partnerships (private or public-sector led) have a dominant impact on high street performance remains difficult to achieve. However, research evidence to date, including the near 100% success of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) getting voted in for second and third five year terms, indicates that partnerships have a real and valued positive effect on town and city centres and the businesses who operate in them.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Charity shops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Change in number of charity shops in town centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice | For more information about charity shops, see: [http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/finance/data/surveys/content/13471/charity_shops_survey_2012_keeping_the_high_street_alive](http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/finance/data/surveys/content/13471/charity_shops_survey_2012_keeping_the_high_street_alive)  
Also see [http://www.charityretail.org.uk/index.html](http://www.charityretail.org.uk/index.html) |
| Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators) | Given that charity shops may be sometimes located in streets adjacent to the main high street, you will need to adopt a town centre-wide approach to the collection of data for this indicator. For this indicator, you may find it useful to adopt a similar data collection approach to that used for the “retail offer” indicator and follow these steps:  
1. Try to do your audit of charity shops in or around September for the same reasons outlined in the data collection methodology for the “retail offer” indicator.  
2. Select the area you are going to gather the data for and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your assessment. If you are only including part of a long road that extends well beyond the town centre survey area, note the street numbers within which your survey area is confined. For each street in your list or map, count the number of charity shops. Don’t forget to check any shopping centres located within your audit area.  
3. Add the total number of charity shops you counted in your town centre. Divide this number by the total number of retail units in your survey area to determine the percentage of units used by charitable enterprises.  
4. Compare these values with your audit results 12 months earlier and establish if the total number and percentage of charity shops has increased or decreased. |
| Improving overall results and reliability | Vintage shops that sell second hand goods are not charity shops. If unsure as to whether a retail outlet is a charity shop or not, just ask the manager.  
This is a snapshot, if you have a pop up (short term or ‘meanwhile’) charity shop on your high street at the time of the survey include it in the figures.  
As increasingly varied uses of vacant retail units develop some may be occupied by social enterprises for non-retail uses, e.g. a nursery & toy library, training establishment or youth activities centre. These may be not for profit or charitable enterprises, however they are not charity shops, and should not be counted for this indicator.  
You may wish to divide up the charity shop locations into those in primary, secondary and tertiary locations so that you can monitor if they are becoming more or less dominant as well as abundant.  
For the purposes of this indicator it is not realistic to determine the amount of floor space occupied by charity shops, so the size of the unit is not a material consideration. |
<p>| Points to consider | A drastic year-on-year rise or fall in the number of charity shops in a town centre may not be as dramatic an issue as it may appear at first, though it can have a medium-term effect on perceptions, including business confidence. However, the indicator may provide a reflection of wider socio-economic trends affecting your town centre. A crude way of validating some of these trends is to contrast the yearly results for this indicator with those of the “retail offer” indicator. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Vacant retail units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Change in number of vacant retail units in town centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice | Experian's Goad service (see [http://www.experian.co.uk/goad/goad.html](http://www.experian.co.uk/goad/goad.html)) provides data and intelligence related to this indicator. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators)</th>
<th>Similarly to charity shops, vacant retail units may sometimes be located in streets adjacent to the main high street, so you will need to adopt a town centre-wide approach to the collection of data for this indicator. For this indicator, you may find it useful to adopt a similar data collection approach to that used for the “charity shops” indicator and follow these steps:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Try to do your audit of vacant retail units in or around September for the same reasons outlined in the data collection methodology for the “retail offer” indicator.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Select the area you are going to gather the data for (e.g. town centre) and make a note (or drawing) of the names of the streets you will cover in your assessment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. For each street on your list or map, count the number of vacant retail outlets. Don’t forget to check any shopping centres located within your audit area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Add the total number of vacant retail units you counted in your town centre and divide this by the total number of retail units in the survey area to determine a percentage.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Compare these values with your audit results 12 months earlier and establish if the total number of vacant retail units has increased or decreased.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Improving overall results and reliability | As in the case of data collection for the “charity shops” indicator, you may want to check that your perception of what the town centre is coincides with the official boundaries of the town centre. Normally, you should be able to obtain this information from your local authority. If the boundary you are using is different from the official one, it may be worth noting the vacant retail units you counted or excluded as a result of the difference so that you can compare your statistic to the one the local authority uses. This indicator only captures the number of units, unit size is not a factor, though the latter (unit size) could be a major issue for the town centre, particularly if a major ‘anchor store’ closes down and its unit remains vacant for some time. If the size of vacant retail units is an issue in your town centre, you should make a note of it and estimate the shop window length of each vacant unit by, for instance, pacing it. This is a snapshot at the time of the audit and pop up (short term or ‘meanwhile’) shops that are occupied do not count as vacant, even if you know that they will only be there for a short time. As with charity shops, you may wish to divide the total figure up by primary, secondary and tertiary locations within the town centre in order to monitor dominance and migration. |

<p>| Points to consider | Some retail unit vacancies may be as a result of sector-specific changes in consumer behaviour (e.g. closure of computer gaming retail outlets due to competition from internet providers). Other vacancies affecting more mainstream products and services (e.g. fresh food shops) may be symptoms of deeper and more systemic issues that could damage the town centre’s ability to attract visitors on a much longer term basis and start a spiral of decline difficult to reverse. This indicator does not differentiate retail unit vacancies by type as this would require a more specialist assessment. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator name</th>
<th>Evening/night time economy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brief description</td>
<td>Evidence of active management of the evening and night time economy in the town centre.</td>
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</table>

| Sources of data, existing commercial indicator options and examples from practice | For more information about the significance of the evening and night time economies as well as resources related to best practice and the Purple Flag accreditation scheme, see [http://www.purpleflag.org.uk/](http://www.purpleflag.org.uk/) |

| Collecting your own data (if not using commercially available data or key performance indicators) | This indicator can be treated like a “yes/no” indicator with respect to whether your town centre has received accreditation for proactively managing the evening and/or night time economy. 

If you don’t already know, you may want to start by contacting your local authority or police to find out if your town centre has received any accreditations related to the management of the evening and/or night time economy. These accreditations may include “Purple Flag”, “Best Bar None” or others. You may also want to approach some of the key stakeholders of the evening and night time economies, such as local restaurant owners, pubs, club managers or your local crime reduction partnership. 

A pub watch scheme that aspires to achieve accreditation may be worth noting as a direction of travel to monitor and support.

Compare your assessment to that done 12 months earlier. Did your town centre have the same accreditation then? Does it have more or less accreditations now than it did then? 

Give this indicator a “yes/no” answer but make a note also of any changes over the last 12 months. |

| Improving overall results and reliability | Some accreditations can change over time and adopt a stars, colour or Olympic medal approach. You may need to keep abreast of this and its implications for your town centre. 

If in some of the other indicators in this toolkit you have surveyed the evening and night time elements of your town centre as separate from the day time, this indicator will have more meaning for your town. For example, you may have learned that 20, 30 or 40% of your town centre businesses operate in the evening or night time economy, but they are not involved or represented in the town centre partnership. Accredited evening economy partnerships tend to include the police, local authority, and licensees and have a direct link or overlap with the wider town centre partnership organisation. |

| Points to consider | This indicator monitors the number of formal accreditations that the town centre’s evening and night time economy management team have secured. In that sense, it is more a reflection of how effective this management is (these awards often accord best practice) rather than whether it takes place at all. In some cases, well managed evening and night time economies may not have sought formal accreditation of their efforts. Where that is the case, this indicator may offer a slightly distorted view of the actual town centre’s current situation though, on the other hand, it will encourage evening and night time economy management teams/partnerships to seek due formal recognition for their success and to learn from and share with others. |
“Gloucestershire LEP would like to acknowledge the funding of BIS, and the private and public sector partners listed further in this document for supporting it’s development.”