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1 Introduction

1.1 This Audit has been produced to collect and collate the baseline evidence that exists in relation to Kidderminster Town Centre. The audit will draw on a vast array of evidence that already exists, which includes both qualitative and quantitative data, and is taken from a number of sources including:

- Retail and Leisure Study, White Young Green Consultants (December, 2006)
- Retail and Leisure Study Update, White Young Green Consultants (December, 2009)
- Location Model, Kidderminster Town Centre, The Learning and Skills Council West Midlands, Skillsmart Retail research Department, (September 2009)
- Annual Monitoring Report, WFDC, (2009)
- Survey of Town Centre Public Environment, Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership, Quality Environment Group, (February, 2008)
- Town Centre Audit, ATCM, (July 2009)

1.2 The Audit will provide the necessary information to inform the proposed Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan, and will ensure that these documents are focused on the issues that matter and are locally specific to Kidderminster.





2 Kidderminster in Context

Setting the Context

2.1 The following two sections provide a brief introduction to Kidderminster Town Centre and many of the points raised here will be investigated further in subsequent sections of the document.

Evolution of Kidderminster

2.2 The first written record of Kidderminster was made in the Domesday book of 1086. Spelt as Chideminstre, it was a large manor owned by King William with 16 outlying settlements. However, the place name suggests the town dates back to Saxon times as the Saxon word minster means monastery or large church. It is believed the name of Kidderminster translates into Church by the river in Saxon and refers to the position of St Mary's Church next to the river Stour.

2.3 King Henry II gave the Manor of Kidderminster to his Steward Manser Biset c1160. A town fair was held annually from 1228 and by 1240 this had developed into a market. A thriving street market is still in operation today on a Thursday and Saturday with a Farmers Market every second Friday of the Month.

2.4 From 1230 Kidderminster was a cloth producing town but by 1735 this had developed into a Carpet manufacturing industry with a worldwide reputation. This was to flourish for more than 200 years and although the industry is much reduced, carpets are still produced in the town today.

2.5 Kidderminster was also the birthplace of Sir Rowland Hill, founder of the modern day postal service and home to Richard Baxter for many years, Politician, Preacher and the founder of the New Meeting Church.

2.6 The carpet industry has heavily influenced the development of the town which once had the highest concentration of carpet manufactures in the world at its peak employing around 20,000.

Kidderminster Today

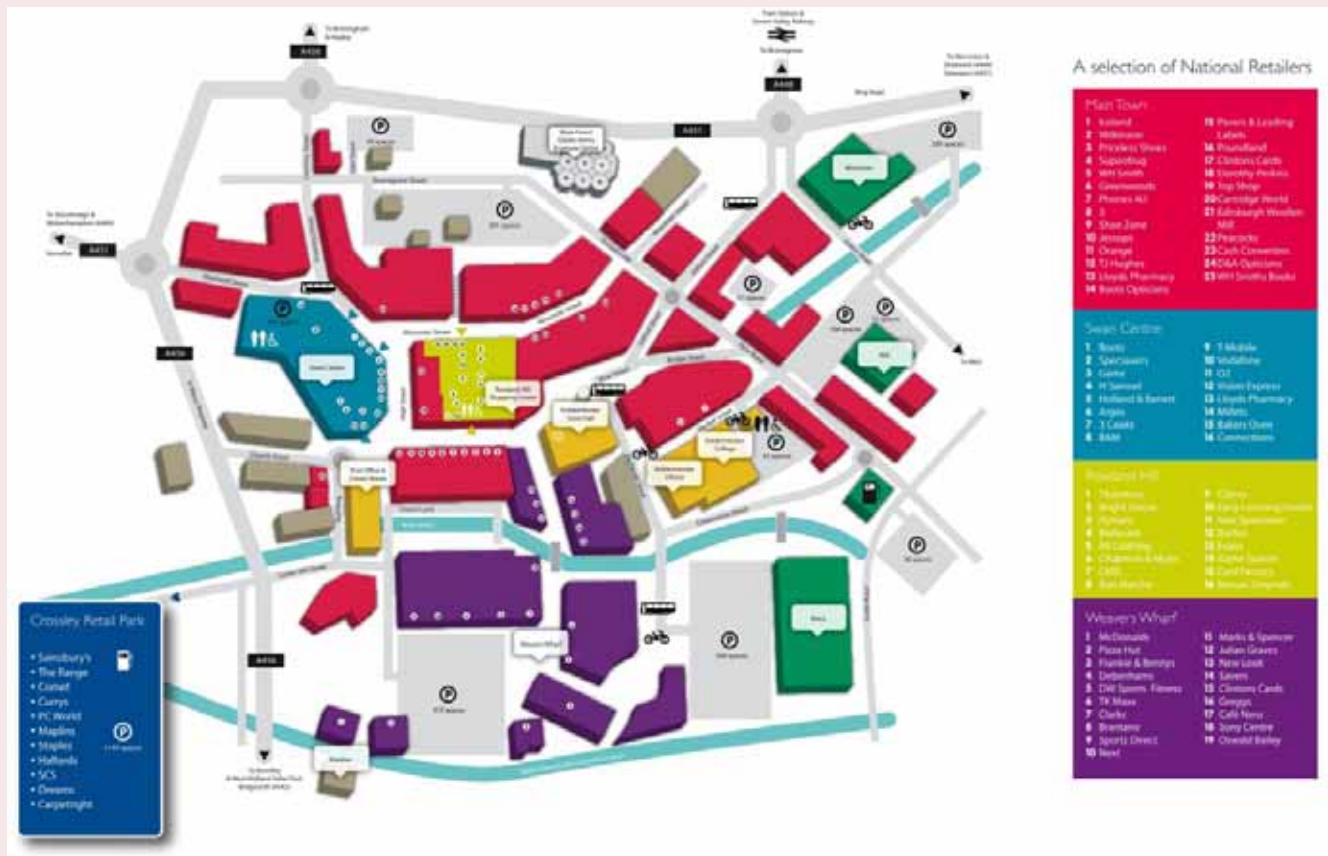
2.7 Kidderminster Town centre consists of 4 main shopping centres all in close walking distance of each other linked with traditional high street shopping, with a mix of restaurants and bars alongside independent and national retailers. The four main centres are:

- The Swan Centre: A 1960's precinct consisting of 38 shops including Boots, H Samuel, Holland & Barrett and Millets.
- The Rowland Hill Centre: A 1980's shopping centre with 28 shops including Co-op Travel, Thorntons, Claires Accessories, Partners and Body Care.

2 Kidderminster in Context

- Weavers Wharf: Opened in 2003 and is a modern retail park located just off Vicar Street consisting of 23 shops which includes Marks & Spencers, Next, TKMaxx and the recently opened Debenhams.
- Crossley Retail Park: An out of town retail park approximately 5 minutes walk from the main town and consisting of 22 shops which includes Sainsbury, The Range, Curry's and Staples.

Kidderminster Town Centre Map



2.8 Additionally, there is also a large B&Q store, which is located outside of the town centre. This is a large store (11,040 sqm net) and complements the retail offer that exists throughout Kidderminster.

2.9 There are also a number of supermarkets that exist within and around Kidderminster town centre. There are 6 main supermarkets that exist close to the town centre in Kidderminster, they are:

- Sainsburys
- Tesco
- Morrisons
- Aldi
- Netto
- Iceland

2.10 There are also a number of smaller stores that offer a convenience range, which include Marks and Spencer, Cool Trader and B&M Bargains. Therefore, the town centre and its wider environs are well served by supermarkets.

2.11 Aside from the retailing, the Town Centre also hosts a number of annual events including an Arts Festival and Carnival and has excellent venues for concerts and recitals such as the Town Hall, the Glades Arena and Leisure Centre, St Mary's Church and the Library. The town centre is also home to Kidderminster College which, in June 2009, had 2,858 students of whom 972 were aged 16 - 18 and 1,886 were adults. A recent Ofsted inspection (June 2009) identified the college as 'good' for its teaching and achievement.

Crossley Retail Park





3 Retail and Leisure Studies

Wyre Forest Retail and Leisure Study

3.1 The Retail and Leisure study undertaken by White Young Green in 2006 provided a vast array of information pertaining to retailing within the District. The purpose of the report was to consider retail and commercial issues in the District and catchment area, specifically in order to guide the type, size and broad location of future retail and leisure provision based on a full assessment of the current and future role and function of the area's principal town centres. The role of Kidderminster was a key element of this, due to the town's strategic influence within the District.

Kidderminster Town Centre - General Description

3.2 Kidderminster is a medium sized historic town located to the southwest of the West Midlands conurbation. The centre is bounded on three sides by the inner ring road (The Ringway) and on the fourth (west side) by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. The town centre shopping area has recently been extended with the (phased) opening of the Weavers Wharf development. Officially opened in 2004, the scheme consists of some 25,613sqm (gfa) of retail and leisure floorspace, including a 7,590sqm (gfa) Tesco foodstore. The Weavers Wharf development has had the affect of shifting the focus of shopping activity in the town centre towards this development, as demonstrated by the relocation of a number of major retailers to Weavers Wharf and closure of other stores within the traditional heart of the centre. Accordingly, while the town centre as a whole appears to have benefited from the introduction of modern large format retailing floorspace at Weavers Wharf, it has made some parts of the town centre vulnerable.

3.3 Shopping provision in Kidderminster Town Centre has traditionally been focused on the pedestrianised area in and around High Street, including Worcester Street and Vicar Street. Within that area are the purpose-built Swan Shopping Centre and Rowland Hill Centre, both of which provide undercover shopping environments. Whilst both these centres have recently been refurbished, they provide a relatively poor quality shopping environment compared to more modern examples of indoor shopping malls. The Rowland Hill Centre remains in poor condition and is occupied by a number of independent or discount retailers.

3.4 The Weavers Wharf development provides a higher quality shopping environment and floorspace more suited to modern retailer requirements. The final phase of this development is currently being completed, involving the conversion of the Piano building to mixed retail/food and drink uses. We also understand that there are current plans to reconfigure and extend some of the existing floorspace, in order to meet the needs of a wider range of formats.

3.5 The Kidderminster Town Centre survey area adopted by Goad differs from the defined Primary Shopping Areas shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map. The Primary Shopping Area includes the units fronting Worcester Street, High Street, Vicar Street and those situated between Bridge Street and Market Street. An indicative arrow on the proposals map indicated the westward extension of the PSA following the opening of the Weavers Wharf development. The Goad plan for Kidderminster is more extensive, covering the Weaver's Wharf development, the Secondary Shopping Area (Lower Mill Street, Market Street, Blackwell Street, Coventry Street, the southern end of Worcester Street, Oxford Street and New Road), as well as Waterloo Street and the

Tesco foodstore at Castle Street. In the assessment below we use the Goad definition of the town centre, as used in the previous retail study, to enable consideration of changes to the centre over time on a consistent basis.

Retailer Representation and Requirements

3.6 National multiple retailers are reasonably well represented in Kidderminster Town Centre, with stores including Marks and Spencer, Boots the Chemist, Next, Brantano, TK Maxx, WH Smith, TJ Hughes, Argos Catalogue Showroom, Wilkinson, Top Shop, Dorothy Perkins, Peacocks and New Look.

3.7 However, despite the arrival of TK Maxx and an improved range offered by Next, there remains a noticeable lack of quality fashion stores, department stores and variety stores within the Town Centre with the range of operators represented giving rise to the impression that the centre is orientated to meet mainly discount comparison shopping needs, particularly in the traditional core shopping area. The poor provision of department stores has been compounded by the closure of Littlewoods. The multiple nationals tend to be located at the Weavers Wharf development and around the pedestrianised area of the Town Centre. In particular, the higher-quality retailers, such as Next and Marks & Spencer are now generally located at Weavers Wharf. However the Marks and Spencer unit is small relative to that operator's store portfolio and carries a restricted range of goods. (Since this study was undertaken planning permission has been granted for a mezzanine floor to be developed within the Marks and Spencer unit which would add approximately 1,177sqm of retail floorspace and will help to improve the offer of the store)

3.8 National retailer representation in the centre has been strengthened, on balance, by the Weavers Wharf scheme. This development incorporates, in addition to the stores mentioned above, DW Sports, TK Maxx and Brantano, as well as, in the service sector Frankie & Benny's and Pizza Hut. Furthermore, the recent introduction of Debenhams into Slingfield Mill in Weavers Wharf will strengthen the sector in this area.



3.9 Information gathered from Focus, a web-based database supplying commercial property information, demonstrates that representation by national multiple retailers is lower in Kidderminster than in surrounding higher order centres. For example, Kidderminster has 55% of the top 20 UK retailers, whereas Worcester, Wolverhampton and Birmingham all have 80% of these retailers.

3.10 The household survey indicates that visitors perceive the quality and choice of shopping and service facilities in Kidderminster as average to good. However, 16% of those surveyed identified that an increased choice and range of shops would encourage them to visit the town centre more frequently.

3.11 In the convenience sector, Kidderminster Town Centre is served by an Iceland, Morrison's, Tesco, Aldi store and a Netto (within the Local Plan defined Town Centre Area). Of those, only the Iceland store falls within the Local Plan-defined PSA, so that the others are edge-of-centre, and in the case of Netto, out-of-centre. There is also a Sainsbury's store close to the town centre in the Crossley Retail Park. The recent business survey indicates that traders in Kidderminster believe the town is well-served in respect of convenience retailing.

3.12 Information gathered from Focus regarding current 'retailer' requirements, indicates that there are currently 47 outstanding requirements from multiple retailers for a presence in Kidderminster including, Homestyle Group, Pets at Home, Moss Cross, The Body Shop and the Carphone Warehouse (the latter now is represented in Crossley Retail Park).

Commercial Yields

3.13 As a measure of retail viability, yields are a valuable indicator, but one which needs to be used with care. The level of yield on its own is of less value than in comparison with other yields at different points in time and in different locations. Yields measured consistently over time can give an indication of the direction in which a particular town centre is moving.

3.14 This trend can be compared with national levels of yield and with those of towns of similar size and type, or with neighbouring and competing towns. A comparative analysis of this type, conducted on a regular basis, can give an indication of how the viability of retailing in a town centre is changing.

3.15 The yields quoted in the table are 'all risk yields' calculated by dividing the annual rent, as though it had been received as a single sum at the year end, by the capital value or sale price of the property. The 'all risks yield' is a simple benchmark which the property market uses to assess the comparative attractiveness of different shopping centres. It is the ratio of rental income to capital value and is expressed in terms of the open market rent of a property as percentage of the capital value. (VOA)

3.16 In simple terms, the lower the yield, the stronger the centre. As can be seen by the table below, Kidderminster's decreasing yield indicates the continuing strength of the centre, which is now comparable to Wolverhampton in terms of yields.

Table 3.0.1

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Kidderminster	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	7.75	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	6.00	5.50
Stourport-on-Severn	9.50	9.50	9.50	9.25	9.25	9.25	9.25	9.25	8.50	8.00	7.00
Birmingham	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.75	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.75	4.75
Wolverhampton	6.00	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	5.50	5.50
Worcester	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75
Dudley	9.00	8.75	9.00	9.00	8.75	8.75	8.75	8.50	8.50	8.00	6.00

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Stourbridge	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	8.00	8.00	6.00
Halesowen	8.50	8.50	8.50	8.50	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25	7.00

3.17 Yields taken at January each year.

Pedestrian Flows

3.18 The highest pedestrian flows within the town centre are observed along the pedestrianised streets of Vicar Street, High Street and at the northern end of Worcester Street, where the majority of national multiple retailers are located. The recent Weaver’s Wharf development also generates high levels of footfall. Pedestrian flows decrease gradually outside these areas and within the more peripheral shopping areas of the town, such as along Blackwell Street, Coventry Street and at the southern end of Worcester Street.

Environmental Quality

3.19 The environmental quality in parts of the town centre has improved considerably over the past few years as a result of major redevelopment schemes and programmes of public realm improvements. In particular the Weavers Wharf development provides an attractive shopping environment, is well maintained and free from litter and graffiti. The older part of the centre, in particular the Swan Shopping Centre, demonstrates lower levels of environmental quality and visual attractiveness. There is some evidence of litter and graffiti and a number of the vacant units are somewhat run down. The centre provides a relatively safe shopping environment due to large pedestrianised areas.

3.20 The majority of respondents to the household survey considered the quality of the environment to be either good (35%) or average (40%), only 12% considered the environment to be of poor quality. Only a small percentage (1%) of respondents quoted a better environment as being a reason to encourage more frequent visits to the town centre.

Conclusions on Vitality and Viability

3.21 Having regard to the range of vitality and viability indicators set out in PPS6, Kidderminster appears to be relatively healthy although there are clearly some areas of weakness. In summary:

- The traditional town centre shopping area has witnessed a growth in vacancies in recent years, partly as a result of the relocation of a number of retailers to the Weavers Wharf development. Many of the key vacant units in their current format are unlikely to be attractive to national multiple retailers seeking representation in Kidderminster;
- The business survey indicates that many traders have been experiencing a downturn in fortune recently, with the Weavers Wharf development having a perceived negative impact on traders in the older parts of the town centre;
- The Town Centre has poor representation from the top 20 retailers when compared to most competing centres. The business survey highlighted a desire to see a greater choice and range of shops in the town centre, with improvements to the environmental quality. However,

given its size and status in the retail hierarchy, the range and choice of shops is generally considered to be satisfactory;

- Kidderminster has maintained its position in terms of commercial yields;
- The centre is accessible and displays relatively good levels of pedestrian footfall;
- The environmental quality of the older parts of the centre is fairly poor, especially when compared to the new Weavers Wharf development which provides floorspace much better configured to modern retailer requirements.

Summary of on-street shopper survey

3.22 Around 2/3 of the interviewees had access to a car both during the day and in the evenings and for around 45% this was the mode of transport used to access the centre on the day of the survey. Another 15% arrived as a passenger in a car. More people arrived at the centre on foot (22%) than by bus (15%). Relatively high proportions of females in the 16-43 age group used public transport.

3.23 The most popular car parks used by centre visitors were the “Aldi” car park (available to all town centre visitors) and the Swan Centre Car Park, both of which are pay and display with the latter being covered. Some 79% of those who parked a car experienced no difficulty in finding a space.

3.24 Most visitors travelled between 6 and 15 minutes to reach the centre (50%). However around 20% had travelled over 20 minutes to reach the centre. The vast majority of visitors (88%) travelled from home and were local to the area (77%).

3.25 The main reason given for visiting the centre elicited a variety of responses although the predominant reason given was for shopping purposes mostly (22%) was for food shopping. A substantial proportion (21%) visited due to work/school/college commitments suggesting that the centre is also a focus for work/learning related activities.

3.26 The survey revealed a wide variety of additional reasons for visiting the centre that day, the main ones being bank/building society/post office (20%), café/restaurant/pub (20%) and comparison goods shopping (17%). However a substantial proportion (19%) also gave no other reason for visiting the centre (other than main purpose). Most of the interviewees visited the centre once a week or more (59%).

3.27 A substantial proportion of the interviewees last used Kidderminster town centre for main food shopping (63%), with the main reason given for using that centre being proximity to home (75%).

3.28 Most interviewees did not intend to carry out shopping for clothing and footwear that day although most (58%) last shopped for clothes and footwear in the town centre, the main reasons for doing so being choice of shops (43%) and nearness to home (34%).

3.29 However, frequency of visits for clothes and footwear shopping to the centre is less satisfactory with some 46% of the interviewed (who primarily shop for clothes and footwear in Kidderminster) using the centre less than once per month (with males being particularly infrequent in their visits – 71% visiting less than once a month for that purpose).

3.30 A question was asked to ascertain whether visits to the centre had increased over the last 5 years (for clothes and footwear shopping) mainly identify whether the Weavers Wharf development had significantly influenced shopping habits. The results showed a change in frequency of visits: 24% indicating that they visited ‘more’ or ‘much more’ frequently than 5 years ago. However, 52% indicated no change in frequency of visits.

3.31 Turning to leisure pursuits, questions were asked regarding frequency of visits to the centre for a range of activities (sports /fitness /entertainment /music /cinema /pubs, bars and clubs). The most notable response in respect of each pursuit was that it was not carried out at all. Visits to pubs, clubs and bars were, not surprisingly, the main activities carried out; however even these were relatively infrequent (21% less than fortnightly). When asked why the centre was not visited for those activities, for each the main response was a combination of too distant (from home) and better alternatives elsewhere. These response patterns were similar relating to both day time and night time activities. The most notable output relating to the evening economy is that even for the most popular evening activity (pubs/bars and clubs) most respondents still either visited elsewhere (37%) or did not carry out that pursuit (25%). When asked why they did not visit Kidderminster town centre in respect of the leisure activities identified above in the evening, the responses were predominately “too far away” and “better alternatives elsewhere”.

3.32 In order to gauge the perception of centre visitors towards the quality of town centre use provision in the centre, a range of questions were asked which sought a qualitative comparison between Kidderminster and “other centres”. The headline results are that:

- Across the board, the most popular response is that Kidderminster town centre is “about the same” as any other centre.
- The centre scores strongest in terms of quality of shops, range of services (e.g. banks and other financial services), the shopping environment and day time safety.
- The centre’s (comparative) worst aspects are considered to be choice and range of pubs/restaurants, car parking provision and car parking prices.

Summary of Business Survey

3.33 A survey of local businesses in Kidderminster and Stourport on Severn town centres was carried out in June 2006 in order to determine the profile of the businesses of each town, the perceived catchment area of customers shopping in the town, perceptions of business performance and to identify what improvements could be undertaken in order to encourage higher levels of retail spend.

3.34 Approximately 68% of the business respondents in Kidderminster stated they are retailers, compared to just 58% in Stourport. The nature of respondents to the business survey is shown in the table below:-

Table 3.0.2

Category	Kidderminster	Stourport
Convenience	14%	32%

Category	Kidderminster	Stourport
Comparison	54%	26%
Service	32%	41%

3.35 A high proportion of businesses in Stourport are 'local independents' (74%), compared to the lower 54% of traders in Kidderminster. 'National' traders make up 23% of Stourport's respondents and 42% of Kidderminster's.

3.36 61% of respondents in Stourport stated they have been trading in the town over twenty years. This compares to just 28% of respondents in Kidderminster which suggests higher levels of turnover of businesses at Kidderminster. Both towns show high proportions of businesses that have always operated from the same premises, (87% and 72% respectively).

3.37 Traders were asked of their views of the Town Centres. Following this, responses highlighted a number of aspects that were of most concern to traders.

3.38 Generally, the following aspects scored poorly with respondents:

- The high pricing of car parks,
- The lack of provision of cultural facilities,
- Lack of events (markets etc.), and
- Poor public toilet provision.

3.39 The above aspects are all seen to impact negatively on the trading experience in Kidderminster Town Centre. Foodstore provision however scored the highest positive response, along with access to the Town Centre by public transport, quality of the pedestrian environment and security and personal safety.

3.40 Most traders (46%) when asked, 'Which type of customers does your business rely on primarily?' returned a response of 'Local residents'. 30% of responses claimed other residents in the Wyre Forest area. In comparison, tourist/ leisure visitors only returned an 11% response.

3.41 58% of respondents believe that the overall mix of uses in Kidderminster town centre is 'about right', however 23% stated that there is too much 'non retail'. Other comments of note from both towns include the view that there was too many 'discount' shops in the centre.

3.42 In Kidderminster, traders cited five particular areas that constrain business:

- a lack of footfall outside their premises,
- high rents/ overheads,
- inadequate customer car parking,
- lack of day visitors/ tourists to the town, and
- a poor quality town centre shopping environment.

3.43 Traders were also asked what measures they think would improve the Town Centre

3.44 In Kidderminster, cheaper and more flexible parking were two measures that returned the highest responses. This correlates with previous answers regarding negative aspects of the Town Centre and further highlights traders unhappiness with the parking facilities presently in the town.

3.45 Furthermore, traders primarily wanted to see improvements to:

- the choice/range of shops in the town centre,
- public toilets,
- more organised events; and
- greater promotion/ marketing of the centre.

3.46 In addition, traders wanted increased CCTV servicing the town centre, which reflects perceptions of some traders that the town centre is unsafe.

3.47 Future aspirations

3.48 Perceived deficiencies at the town centres may have impacted on traders future aspirations. 56% of respondents in Kidderminster state that they have no aspirations to alter their business in the next five years. Of the traders that are planning changes, 21% plan to refurbish their existing floorspace, 8% plan to relocate within the Town Centre, while only 4% are confident enough in their current trading ability that they plan to extend their floorspace.

3.49 General Comments

3.50 Kidderminster:

- Too many vacant units in the town centre
- A need for large 'anchor' stores to be encouraged to locate in the town
- Need to increase parking provision
- Disenchantment with council due to a perceived lack of support of traders
- Relocations (incl Weavers Wharf) at the town are decreasing trade
- Improved signage needed in the town
- Untidy appearance of the town centre
- A need to reduce rents or establish incentives to support traders



4 SkillsSmart Survey

Introduction

4.1 The aim of this project was to develop industry information and highlight training needs to help small retailers understand their local markets and how they are perceived by their customers. Skillsmart Retail created a profile of consumers in Kidderminster and analysed the findings from the street interviews, mystery shopping and town centre assessment. The report also includes information from the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) which is an annual survey of business establishments.

Competitive Position of Kidderminster

4.2 According to CACI⁽¹⁾ Retail Footprint data, Kidderminster is **ranked 23rd out of the 300 retail destinations** in the **West Midlands** terms of its “**attractiveness**” as a retail centre.

4.3 The “attractiveness” score is calculated through a mathematical model that takes into account comparison expenditure at the destination, total shopper population, transport links and the proximity to larger retail centres.

4.4 Within the Retail Footprint database, Kidderminster is classified as a Major Centre and is ranked **255th out of 3,800 UK retail destinations in terms of attractiveness.**

Table 4.0.1 Retail Centres with similar score in West Midlands 2008

Rank In Region	Name	Major Class	Retail Footprint Score
14	Walsall	Major Centre	373
15	Redditch	Major Centre	344
16	Sutton Coldfield	Major Centre	341
17	Stafford	Major Centre	328
18	Stratford-upon-Avon	Regional Town	326
19	Rugby	Major Centre	250
20	West Bromwich	Major Centre	249
21	Tamworth	Major Centre	241
22	Newcastle-under-Lyme	Major Centre	238
23	Kidderminster	Major Centre	208
24	Lichfield	Metropolitan Town	203
25	Birmingham - One Stop Shopping Centre	Purpose Built District Centre	192
26	Dudley	Major Centre	190

1 CACI is one of the UK’s leading market analysis companies whose techniques and datasets are common currency for most retailers and property developers as well as for public bodies seeking to understand patterns of retailing.

Rank In Region	Name	Major Class	Retail Footprint Score
27	Cannock	Major Centre	190
28	Evesham	Regional Town	185
29	Birmingham - Northfield	Metropolitan Town	158
30	Owesity	Regional Town	156
31	Bromsgrove	Metropolitan Town	155
32	Birmingham - Fort Shopping Park	Fashion Park	142
33	Tamworth - Ventura Retail Park	Fashion Park	140

4.5 Source: CACI Retail Footprint 2008

4.6 The table shows Kidderminster classed as a Major Centre (according to CACI retail footprint data). This means that traditionally it has a mix of high quality and value retailers. The proportions of value and premium retailers within Major Centres vary across the UK. Further Retail Footprint information about Kidderminster reveals it to be a 'Value Centre', meaning it has a high proportion of value retailers (greater than 40%) and low levels of premium provision (less than 10%). Such a centre has a strong retail identity meaning only substantial change in the retail mix can change the perception of a town.

ACORN Consumer Profile

4.7 ACORN is the leading geodemographic tool used to identify and understand the UK population and its demand for products and services. Businesses use this information to improve their understanding of customers, target markets and determine where to locate operations. ACORN categorises all 1.9 million UK postcodes, making it a powerful discriminator and giving a clearer understanding of clients and prospects.

4.8 ACORN classifications work at three levels. The highest level of classification is that of five broad categories. These can provide an overall indication of an area's consumers. The next level is that of the 18 groups. This further refinement provides greater insight into the life stages of consumers. Beneath this level, households are further divided into 56 types.

4.9 The consumer profiles were derived by comparing the population of Kidderminster with that of the UK overall.

Profile of consumers around Kidderminster

4.10 According to the CACI profile, in 2008 there were an estimated 251,000 people living within a 20-minute drivetime of Kidderminster.

Consumer Categories

4.11 An analysis of the consumer categories within a 20-minute drivetime of Kidderminster indicates that in comparison to the UK average, the area has a consumer catchment of affluent consumers.

Consumer Groups

4.12 The consumer profile further refines these higher level categories into more detailed groups. The three largest consumer groups identified in Kidderminster are:

- Secure Families (64,000)
- Struggling Families (32,000)
- Wealthy Executives (32,000)

Secure Families

4.13 This group comprises of home owning families living comfortably in stable areas in suburban and semi-rural locations. They mainly live in three bedroom semi-detached homes. Families might include young children, teenagers or even young adults who have not yet left home. These areas will also include some empty nesters.

4.14 People are employed in a range of occupations, including middle management and clerical roles. There are also reasonable numbers of shopworkers and skilled manual workers. Incomes are at least of average levels and many earn well above the national average.

4.15 Most people in this group have some savings and would consider themselves financially prudent. The more affluent will have good company cars and will have built up somewhat greater levels of savings and investments.

4.16 These are the stable families that make up much of middle Britain.

Struggling Families

4.17 These are low income families living on traditional low-rise estates. Some have bought their council houses but most continue to rent.

4.18 Estates will usually be either terraced or semi-detached. Two bedroom properties are more typical but the larger families may be housed in three bedroom properties. Either way there may be an element of overcrowding. On some estates there are high numbers of single parents while on others there are more elderly people, some with long-term illness.

4.19 Incomes are low and unemployment relatively high. Jobs reflect the general lack of educational qualifications and are in factories, shops and other manual occupations. There are fewer cars than most other areas. Money is tight and shopping tends to focus on cheaper stores and catalogues.

4.20 Visiting the pub, betting, football pools, bingo and the lottery are the principal leisure activities.

4.21 These families share the twin disadvantages of educational under achievement and consequent lack of opportunity. They are struggling to get by in an otherwise affluent Britain.

Wealthy Executives

4.22 These are some of the most affluent people in the UK. They live in wealthy, high status suburban, rural and semi-rural areas of the country. Houses tend to be large and detached with four or more bedrooms. Many are owned outright.

4.23 Households are a mix of middle -aged families, empty nesters and wealthy retired. They are very well educated individuals with high levels of academic qualifications. Most are employed in senior managerial and professional occupations or are running their own businesses.

4.24 Car ownership is very high with most households having two or more cars, one of which is likely to be a high value company car.

4.25 Unsurprisingly, given their education and occupations, incomes are high as are levels of savings and investments. These consumers are financially sophisticated and purchase a wide range of financial products. They read the quality broadsheets and are likely to take two or more holidays a year.

4.26 In short, these are consumers with the money and space to enjoy very comfortable lifestyles.

4.27 The table below shows the population of Kidderminster within a 20-minute drivetime categorised into ACORN groups. It also gives them as a percentage of the total areas, the total population and how the figure compares with the average distribution in England. The numbers in bold indicate where the proportion of that group equals or exceeds the average for England (a score of 100 equals the England average).

Table 4.0.2 ACORN Profile for 20 minute drivetime around Kidderminster

Groups	Description	Data for area	Data as % for area	Data as % for base	Index av = 100
	Total Population	250,837	100	100	100
1.A	Wealthy Executives	31,378	12.5	8.7	143
1.B	Affluent Greys	21,663	8.6	7.6	114
1.C	Flourishing Families	31,086	12.4	8.4	147
2.D	Prosperous Professionals	929	0.4	2.1	17
2.E	Educated Urbanites	2,120	0.8	6.1	14
2.F	Aspiring Singles	1,396	0.6	3.8	14
3.G	Starting Out	5,215	2.1	3.6	58
3.H	Secure Families	64,258	25.6	16	160
3.I	Settled Suburbia	28,901	11.5	6.4	180
3.J	Prudent Pensioners	6,628	2.6	3.1	86

Groups	Description	Data for area	Data as % for area	Data as % for base	Index av = 100
4.K	Asian Communities
4.L	Post Industrial Families	4,550	1.8	4.7	39
4.M	Blue Collar Roots	11,478	4.6	7.4	62
5.N	Struggling Families	31,956	12.7	12.1	105
5.O	Burdened Singles	6,043	2.4	3.6	66
5.P	High Rise Hardship	2,258	0.9	1.2	77
5.Q	Inner City Adversity

4.28 Source: CACI Retail Footprint 2008 / ... Data too small to show

4.29 In comparison with the national picture, Kidderminster has a higher proportion of Settled Suburbia, Secure Families and Wealthy Executives than are typically seen in England.

4.30 When referencing this with CACI Retail Footprint data we see that as a "Value Centre" premium provision makes up a small proportion of Kidderminster's retail offer. This means that there is a possibility that members of the Wealthy Executive consumer group will go to nearby towns that have a higher level of premium provision.

4.31 The proportion of Prosperous Professionals, Educated Urbanites and Aspiring Singles is below the national average.

Mystery Shopping Results for Kidderminster

4.32 A mystery shopping visit involves an anonymous individual visiting a store, posing as a customer and judging it against a range of criteria. It is a popular method for retailers and other consumer-oriented businesses (such as restaurants, banks and petrol stations), to judge how well they are performing. The strength of the mystery shop approach is that it offers an objective assessment of shops against a number of agreed criteria. ESA⁽²⁾ researchers, commissioned by Skillsmart Retail, carried out two rounds of mystery shopping during August 2009 in Kidderminster among 50 independent outlets.

4.33 The mystery shopping exercise ranked each store on a number of measures which included:

- First impressions
- In-store standards
- Promotional material
- Staff assessment

2 ESA is a full service agency with over 25 years experience providing specialist retail research and is accredited to industry quality standards see www.esa.co.uk

- Checkout and till points
- Staff transactions

4.34 The following outlines the aggregate scores from the mystery shopping process for the 50 Kidderminster retailers who were visited. 80% is the benchmark for the overall score across the six measures.

Mystery Shopping results for Kidderminster (Part one)

Table 4.0.3 Mystery Shopping Results for Kidderminster (Part One)

Base: 50 independent retailers	Average score across 2 rounds %
First Impressions	
Exterior made it clear what the shop sold	100
Clear shop branding	95
Eye-catching exterior	95
Clean and Tidy window display	99
Entrance free from litter / debris	100
Inviting window display	95
Easy access for pushchair users	82
East access for wheelchair users	68
Opening times clearly visible	88
In-store Standards	
Could more freely around the store without obstruction	95
Product shelves clean and dust free	96
Shopfloor clean and tidy	100
Shelves tidy and well displayed	97
Prices clearly identifiable	93
Temperature at a comfortable level	95
Music at an appropriate level	90
Store was safe from potential hazards (Health and Safety)	95
Store well-lit to create right atmosphere	99
Promotional Material	
Specific product line promotions on display	37

4.35 Source: ESA / Skillsmart Retail 2009

First Impressions

4.36 Kidderminster's independent retailers scored well on first impressions. Clear branding, eye-catching exteriors and tidy window displays made shops inviting. Entrances to stores were clear of litter and easily accessible for people with pushchairs. Just over two-thirds of shops had adequate access for wheelchair users.

4.37 The majority of shops (88%) had opening times visible from the outside. Compared with other locations where the mystery shopping programme has been carried out, this is one of the largest proportions Skillsmart Retail has seen.

In-store Standards

4.38 In-store standards scored very highly in both rounds. Most stores were easy to move around, were clean and had products that were well displayed. The majority of stores were also assessed to have clear pricing on their products, as well as the store being sufficiently well lit.

4.39 Just over a third of shops had specific product line promotions. This is often more prevalent in larger multiple retailers.

Mystery Shopping results for Kidderminster (Part two)

Table 4.0.4 Mystery Shopping Results for Kidderminster (Part Two)

Base: 50 independent retailers	Average score across 2 rounds %
Staff Assessment	
Verbal greeting on entering the shop	66
Offered assistance	71
Polite and pleasant response to query	99
Staff member answered without referring to another member of staff	96
Maintained eye contact	98
Staff had sufficient product knowledge	96
Staff appropriately dressed	98
Staff wearing a name badge	12
Shopfloor manager easily identifiable	33
Able to answer local knowledge question	95
Checkout / till points	
Member of staff at till when entered	87
Staff Transaction (£4 purchase)	
Able to make a purchase	55
Verbal greeting as approached counter	86
Maintained eye contact	97

Base: 50 independent retailers	Average score across 2 rounds %
Felt welcomed	97
Staff member enthusiastic	97
Attempt made to sell any other product	27
Offered a receipt	69
Store had computerised till to receive payment	32
Gave verbal farewell	92

4.40 Source: ESA / Skillsmart Retail 2009

Staff Assessment

4.41 Only two-thirds of staff offered an initial greeting to shoppers and under three-quarters of shop staff made an initial offer of assistance. Name badges were only displayed in 6 of the 50 shops making identification of a shopfloor manager difficult.

4.42 However, when staff members were approached by the mystery shopper they answered queries in a polite and pleasant manner, displaying good product knowledge.

Staff Transaction

4.43 Payment point staff were enthusiastic and provided a friendly service. Greeting the shopper when approached at the till, maintaining eye contact and offering a farewell when the transaction was concluded further developed the relationship with the customer. However, despite making the shopper feel welcomed only one in four shops attempted to upsell.

4.44 Over two thirds of stores offered a receipt and this may be connected to the low proportion of shops having computerised tills (32%).

Overall Impression

4.45 The majority (87%) of mystery shoppers indicated that they would return to the stores that they had visited and the same proportion would recommend them to a friend

Benchmarking

4.46 Skillsmart Retail has delivered the Location Model Programme (including mystery shopping carried out by ESA Market Research) in many towns across Great Britain over the past four years. Nearly 4,000 independent retailers have benefited from an objective appraisal of their offer. In light of Kidderminster's excellent overall mystery shopping score, it is worth highlighting other locations that have scored well.

Table 4.0.5 Mystery Shopping: Top 20 scores by location

Rank	Town	Average Score
1	Torquay (Torbay)	89.9

Rank	Town	Average Score
2	Stratford-upon-Avon	89.6
3	Uttoxeter	88.6
4	Kidderminster	87.5
5	Brentwood	87.4
6	Bolton	86.4
7	Redruth	86.1
8	Nottingham	85.0
9	Exeter	84.8
10	Wednesbury	84.6
11	Poole	84.4
12	Cirencester	84.3
13	Rugby	84.1
14	Gloucester	83.1
15	Paignton (Torbay)	83.0
16	Brixham (Torbay)	82.9
17	Christchurch	82.6
18	Cradley Heath	82.5
19	Northwich	82.1
20	Winsford	82.1

Overall Summary of the mystery shopping:

- Kidderminster independent retailers overall mystery shopping score (87.5%) ranked 4th against benchmarked mystery shopping studies
- Of the 50 outlets that were mystery shopped, only 4 scored beneath the “benchmark score” of 80%
- 42 out of 50 shops had their customer service rated either “good” or “very good”
- Of the 50 mystery shop experiences, 43 of the independent shoppers (86%) said that they would both return to the shop and would recommend this store to a friend
- Only 3 out of the 50 shops did not have their opening times clearly visible
- A verbal greeting was offered by a store member in nearly three quarters of the stores visited
- The majority of shops were easily accessible to wheelchairs and pushchairs
- In 18 out of 32 shops, an attempt was made to upsell or ask if the customer required anything else
- In 12% of the shops (6 stores) shop staff wore a name badge
- Just over half of the shops visited had signs that chip and pin devices were available to receive payment

Street Interview Results for Kidderminster

4.47 As part of the study, a series of street surveys were conducted by ESA during August 2009. A total of 100 shoppers in the town centre were interviewed (62 of these were residents and 18 visitors). The street survey revealed a number of points of interest to the retail and wider business community in Kidderminster:

- Just under half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that finding a parking space was easy
- 2 out of 5 respondents agreed that it was easy to find public facilities such as the toilets
- 67% of respondents stated that the town was clean and tidy
- 60% of respondents agreed there was a good variety of independent shops
- 74% of respondents agreed there was a good variety of national chains
- 80% of respondents agreed that Kidderminster had enough facilities for a weekly shop
- Half of the respondents indicated that the town centre had shown definite signs of improvement in the last two years
- 85% of respondents agreed that shopping hours were convenient
- 76% of respondents had made a purchase and the average spend was less than £20
- Other shopping destinations included Merry Hill, Birmingham, Dudley and Brierly Hill
- 66% of respondents did not use the internet to buy items otherwise found in the town centre

4.48 Verbatim comments included:

- "I like local markets and this town has an excellent one"
- "I like the town, it was nice"
- "The accessibility of the town is not very good, I am disabled and it would have been difficult to get into the town if I wasn't dropped off"
- "The town is a bit quiet in the evening, there needs to be more to do"
- "The town is very dirty. There is litter, chewing gum, cigarette ends and cable ties from the market on the floor"
- "The town needs more childrens shops"
- "The town needs more shops in general"
- "There is a real problem with underage drinking in this town"
- "There should be better night life"

Town Centre Assessment

4.49 SkillSmart Retail's Town Centre Assessment focuses more on the wider environment that shoppers and retailers have to operate within. The assessment results in a measure of how well a town centre is physically equipped and how well it provides an attractive retail environment. The assessment is carried out by an auditor who has not previously visited the town centre.

4.50 The assessment reflects upon:

- Eating establishments
- Public toilets
- Public transport

- Public directions
- Cleanliness
- Improvement / renovation
- Tourist attractions
- Retail shops

4.51 The results of this provide important intelligence and the findings can also be compared with the results of the street interviews.

Table 4.0.6 Assessment Findings

Indicator	Areas of Praise	Areas for Focus
Eating Establishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good choice of independent food establishments • Waiter staff were observed to demonstrate a high standard of customer interaction 	
Public Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were safe, clean and litter free • Soap and hand drying facilities were available • Facilities available for disabled people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection timetables were not on display • No baby changing facilities
Public Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plenty of bus stops located within the town centre • Bus stops were free from graffiti and vandalism • Taxis available for use 	
Public Directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public signs for the museum and most public facilities were present within the town centre • There were maps highlighting major landmarks / facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More signs needed for the police station
Cleanliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent friendly facilities rated "very good" • Disabled access rated "very good" • Pavements were clean and even 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some instances of graffiti • Some instances of begging • Instances of street drinking and antisocial behaviour
Improvement / renovation	The assessor reported no visible signs of major or minor improvements being made in the town	
Tourist attractions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tourist attractions displayed their opening times • Historical buildings could be identified • Souvenir shops sold merchandise supporting the tourist attractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourist attractions did not look busy
Retail Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was advertising for small independent shops in the town • Shops had generally adapted to seasonal change • Shops were open and looked busy • There was advertising for larger national chains • Advertising for shops in languages other than English 	

4.52 Summary from the Assessor:

"In general, the town had something to suit everyone, from market traders to big retailers. I enjoyed my visit, and the town was really busy, but very clean. The flowers around the town were superb. I saw two community officers and I also saw some people fund raising for birds of prey. I will definitely return for the shopping and the friendliness of the people, and I will definitely recommend Kidderminster to my friends. The good points far outweighed the bad."

Conclusions

4.53 Kidderminster's retail offer appears to cater adequately for the local population. To this end, respondents in the street surveys consisted mainly of local residents, with a high proportion either not shopping outside of Kidderminster or not feeling strongly enough about an alternative destination to name it. This is one of the highest proportions SkillSmart Retail has seen.

4.54 Whilst retail footprint data alluded to Kidderminster's value retail offer, consumer profiling also highlighted the presence of a large number of Wealthy Executives, one of the most affluent consumer groups in the UK. As one of the largest consumer groups in the area, accommodating this market will be important to prevent any leakage of expenditure to nearby towns. Evidence of exclusive shopping areas and commercial zones did seem to be an attempt to cater for the wealthier consumer in Kidderminster.

4.55 Nevertheless, maintaining Kidderminster's value retail offer, whilst expanding the provision of premium goods, could be difficult. There seems to be an opportunity for local retailers to sell more expensive products, providing such items are consistent with current branding, knowledge and reputation.

4.56 The recent high profile opening of Debenhams, as part of the Slingfield Mill project at Weavers Wharf, may increase footfall to the area. This is likely to be appreciated by the local business community. Kidderminster's retailers appear to be in good shape according to the mystery shopping results, with 46 of 50 sites scoring over the benchmark of 80%. Therefore, it is not surprising that Kidderminster is currently ranked 4th in the mystery shopping league table of over 80 locations.



5 Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership

Introduction to Town Centre Management

5.1 Since the early 1990's, the Association of Town Centre Management has emerged as a major voice for Town Centre Managers and their associated partnerships in the UK. In broad terms the town centre management model is based on the concept of shopping centre management with the main difference being the complex array of property ownerships and management powers. Many town centre partnerships have morphed into companies with direct powers over certain town centre support services. Most recently WorcesterCity has successfully progressed plans for a Business Improvement District (BID) which enables the body to levy an additional tax on traders to fund town centre management activities.

5.2 The services often undertaken include:

- Promotion & Marketing (including press liaison, events, markets & street trading)
- Accessibility & Car Parking
- Attractive Environment (including street cleansing, street furnishings, public conveniences & seasonal decorations)
- Secure & Safe
- Vitality & Viability (including business planning, budget control, monitoring of empty shops, fund raising/sponsorship, business networking and public relations).

Review of Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership:

5.3 Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership was established in 1993 and its membership and activities have remained relatively unchanged since then. The biggest focus for the partnership remains on events, including the Christmas lights and switch on. This is despite a major restructure in 2007 which sought to establish a series of 'action groups' (see below). The Chairman of the Partnership, Peter Picken, has been a member since the inception of the partnership and has been Chairman since 1998.

5.4 The Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership Business Plan (2007-2010) of April 2007 sets out the following vision:



5.5 *“To play a leading role in the development of Kidderminster as a regional retailing and business centre, through a partnership approach with the Council and other key stakeholder interests.”*

5.6 To achieve the vision, the business plan established a series of action groups being guided by a 'Steering Group' as follows:

- Events/ Marketing;
- Community Safety;
- Quality Environment; and
- Business Development.

5.7 The list of partnership members is impressive and includes the two local authorities. However, detailed scrutiny of the attendees and discussions at meetings reflects a general low level of activity. The partnership does not attract the most senior representatives of some of the main organisations responsible for a number of the key services; neither does it attract large sections of the business community. In particular it has poor representation from the national retail chains.

5.8 The Town Centre Manager was appointed to take stock and drive forward the business plan. However, Jackie Roberts rapidly established that the partnership had limited resources and more importantly only limited support and representation from the wider town centre business community. Capacity to deliver is extremely constrained with the part-time Town Centre Manager contracted to work just 18.5 hours per week. Otherwise, the partnership is reliant on the valued but limited voluntary support from partners.

5.9 Some of the town centre management activities are undertaken as 'part of the day job' of the partner organisations for example West Mercia Constabulary, including Community Safety Officer's and KRISP deliver the Community Safety agenda and events are delivered through joint working between the Town Centre Manager and the events team of WFDC. The two associated action groups have proved to be the most effective. However, co-ordinating activity between the action groups and delivering the Quality Environment and Business Development agendas has proved much less successful with infrequent meetings although good relationships have been established with individual officers within the Council. Indeed some significant functions and service areas are seemingly detached from the partnership including accessibility and highways.

5.10 Despite recruitment events and ideas workshops organised by the Town Centre Manager, there has been only limited interest and drive to take forward the initiative. Some of the apparent apathy is thought to result from the internal frustrations of the partnership which clearly lacks the necessary influence to have a significant impact.

5.11 Whilst progress in some areas has been slow, the new Town Centre Manager has overseen a significant number of projects. However, many of these have been reliant on direct input from the manager and although in numerous instances assisted with support from partners the level of input from the Manager is thought to be unsustainable within the confines of 18.5 hours.

5.12 Despite the limitations, recent successes include:

- A new town centre website
- InKidderminster Magazine
- Christmas Lights switch-on event
- Harvest festival event.

5.13 Funding the partnership activities is either directly or indirectly provided by the relevant responsible authority i.e. WFDC, West Mercia Constabulary etc. The partnership itself is reliant on voluntary contributions mainly generated from the main shopping centres and the District Council. The town centre manager position is funded through the District Council in an innovative joint venture with the owners of WeaversWharf shopping centre. However, this is a fixed-term

arrangement which comes to an end in March 2011. Between now and then it will be essential for Town Centre Management activity to be fully invigorated and for sustainable business models to be developed to ensure this valuable role is maintained.

5.14 The extent to which the 'partnership' is influencing the key service areas is currently limited by the various constraints highlighted above. However, as the Town Centre Partnership has struggled to generate the necessary momentum a new initiative has emerged in the form of the Kidderminster ReWyre [regeneration] Initiative. During 2009, this project galvanised the interest of regional, County and local investors and interest groups. It is anticipated that a Board of Directors will be established to guide the ReWyre Initiative consisting of the highest level representation from key public sector bodies and private sector businesses.

5.15 As we enter 2010, the final year of the Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership Business Plan (2007), the time has come to take stock. This paper looks to set out the basis of a new town centre strategy that will reinvent partnership working in Kidderminster Town Centre with a more business based model that is embedded within the emerging structure of the town's wider regeneration.

Town Centre Survey

5.16 The Partnership developed a Corporate Management structure in 2007 which includes Working Groups to covering town centre Community Safety, Business Development, Quality Environment and Events and worked with Wyre Forest District Council to appoint a Town Centre Manager in March 2008.

5.17 The Partnership undertook a survey of the town centre to assess the environment of the town and to identify potential issues and who would be responsible for taking these issues forward. Some of the main issues raised in the audit included:

- Problems with landscaping within the town
- Issues regarding street furniture, primarily bins
- A related issue was the existence of chewing gum and the need to hire a specific piece of machinery to tidy up this form of litter
- Signage throughout the town
- The need to provide continuity in terms of styles of signs, furniture etc within the town
- In a number of areas the town appeared 'unkempt' and required tidying

5.18 The full audit can be viewed in the Appendix A. In addition to the audit a number of other issues were identified by partnership and these have been summarised below:

1. General

- Enforcement of delivery vehicles
- Check No Cycling signs
- Design Brief

2. Street Lighting

“DARK AREAS”:

- Coventry St
- Blackwell St(above Swan Centre Car Park - same side)
- Church St
- Exchange St(outside Brintons Offices and opposite by library)
- Oxford St(from Town Hall to island)
- Bridge St
- New Rd (by RAFA Club)
- Prospect Hill
- "Brinton's footpath" (ie outside New Look)**
- Worcester St(very dull orange lights from end of Pedestrian Area (KTC3 opportunity) ***See below

“SUBWAYS AND APPROACHES”

- Lamp needed bottom of Rack Hill
- M & S etc Service Area - Needs extra light - opportunity to light river**
- River Lighting Scheme
- Improve lighting on "Brinton's footpath" - see also above**
- Canal Tow Path Scheme
- WeaversWharf Lights need cleaning
- 'Bus Station lighting doesn't seem fully operative
- Town Hall & Sir Rowland Hill Statue need floodlighting - NB There is inoperative one on Lamp
- Weaver's Wharf and Town Hall
- Lantern Types extension ***
- Vicar St (particularly Lloyds Bank end & outside Rowland Hill Centre)
- Worcester St?? ***As Above - from end of Pedestrian Area
- Worcester St- outside Rowland Hill Centre
- Bottom Step Entry
- Outside Woolworths, Boots, on corner by W H Smiths (books)

3. Notes on "Gateways" into Town Centre following Initial Survey 31st October 2007

From Birmingham A456

- Signage satisfactory
- Landscaping on Worcester Cross Ringway to be improved

From Bromsgrove A448

- See separate notes on Comberton Hill
- Re-instatement of waterfall on Constitution Hill Ringway

From Worcester A442

- Signage satisfactory

From Stourport A451

- Signage satisfactory
- Pleasant landscaping to Brinton's Park

From Bewdley A456

- Sign obscured by hedge
- Town centre information signage limited

From Bridgnorth A442

- Signage satisfactory
- Remove old signs for completed housing developments
- Overgrown shrubs etc. on junction of Proud Cross and Park Butts Ringways

To Park Butts traffic lights open-up views of canal-side, river, Baxter statue etc.

- Groups of signs to St Mary's Ringway to be consolidated
- View of Mount Skipet from St Mary's Ringway and Park Lane redevelopment?
- Parking in and re-surfacing of Mill Street

From Stourbridge A451

- Detailed assessment needed

General

- Consider floral planter, to extensive protective railings to Ringway particularly around Worcester Road island, Proud Cross Ringway and Park Butts lights. If going to be done at all this would be a major scheme covering much of the Ringway. Could it be maintained?
- NB Subways properly signed

Notes on Comberton Hill

- Island at bottom of Comberton Hill to be improved as part of KTC3?
- Assess signage to Comberton Place, Courts and old market car park and rationalise removing redevelopment sign poles, school sign etc.
- Consolidate street lighting but this may already be in hand.
- Tidy wall below former Farmers Boy and planters to Comberton Place and generally provide more greenery.

Summary

5.19 The audit undertaken by the Town Centre Partnership provides an insight into some of the detailed issues which require consideration within the town. A number of key issues have been highlighted from this audit and a number of problem areas identified. It will be the role of the strategy and action plan to pick up on these issues and begin to identify potential solutions.



6 ACTM Audit

Kidderminster Town Centre Audit - July 2009

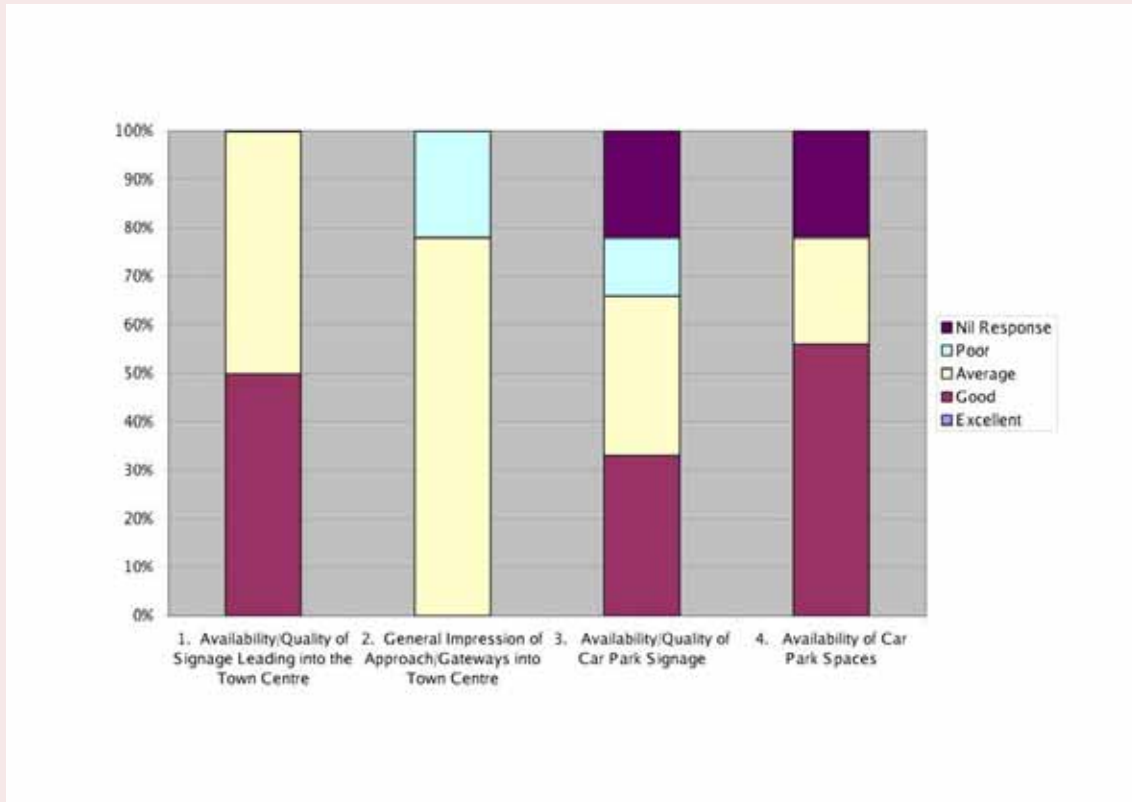
6.1 An audit of the town centre was undertaken by a number of individuals from across the West Midlands. The people who undertook the survey were all Town Centre managers from across the region and all were members of the Association of Town Centre Managers (ATCM). Therefore, although the sample size was relatively small, the members provided a assessment based on their specific skills and subject area and therefore provide a useful summary of how Kidderminster is viewed by professionals within the retail sector.

6.2 The following graphs provide the responses received from the audit, with the questions being grouped into a number of categories. The members involved in the audit were asked to respond to the questions by using a spectrum of Excellent through to Poor.

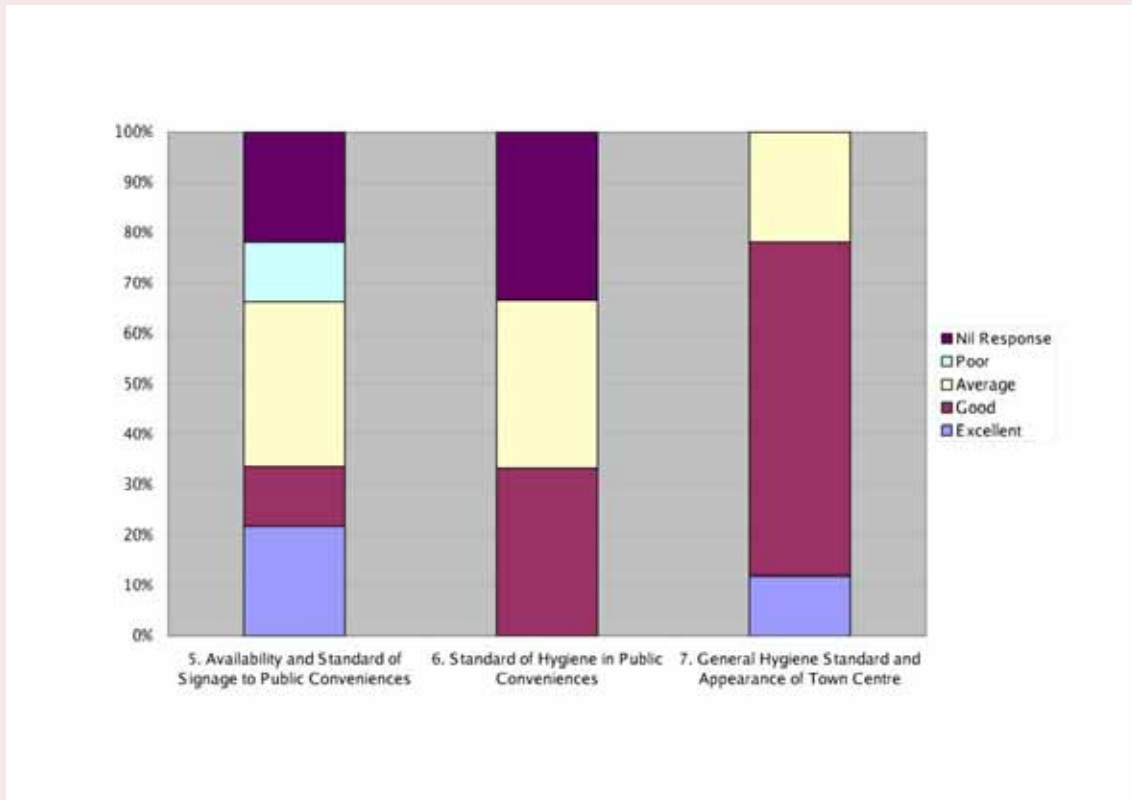
Street Furniture in Vicar Street



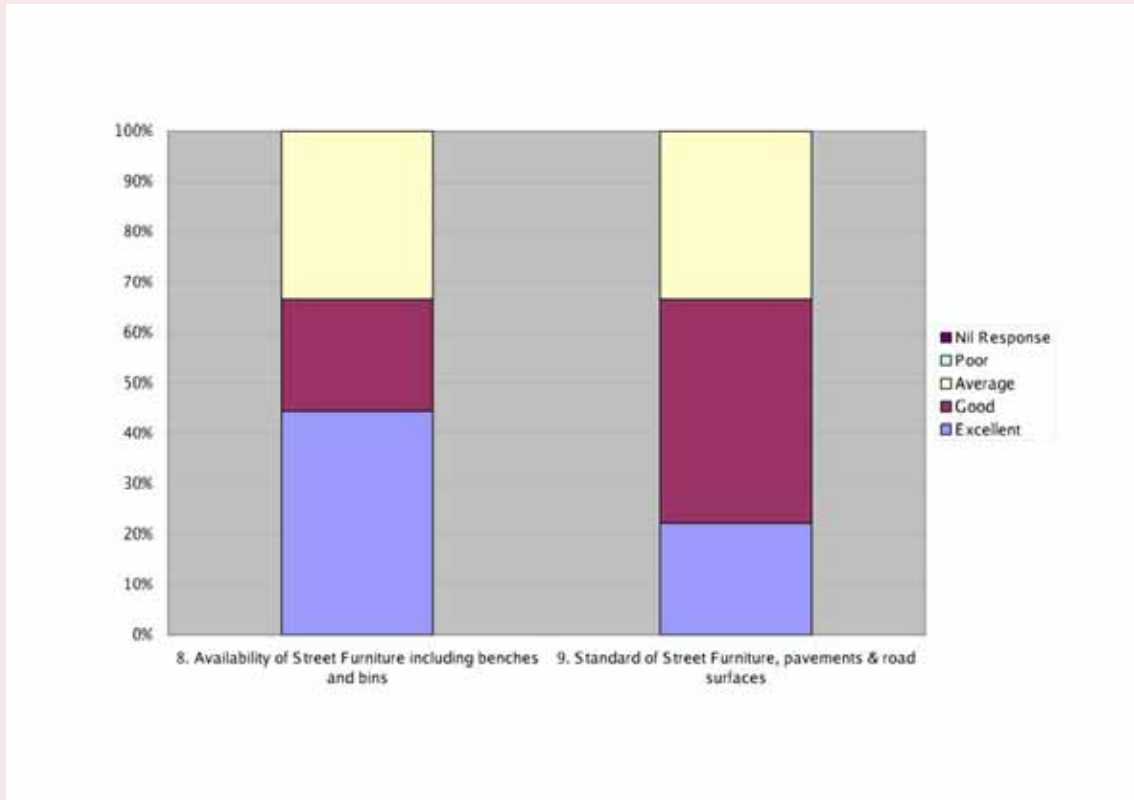
Accessibility



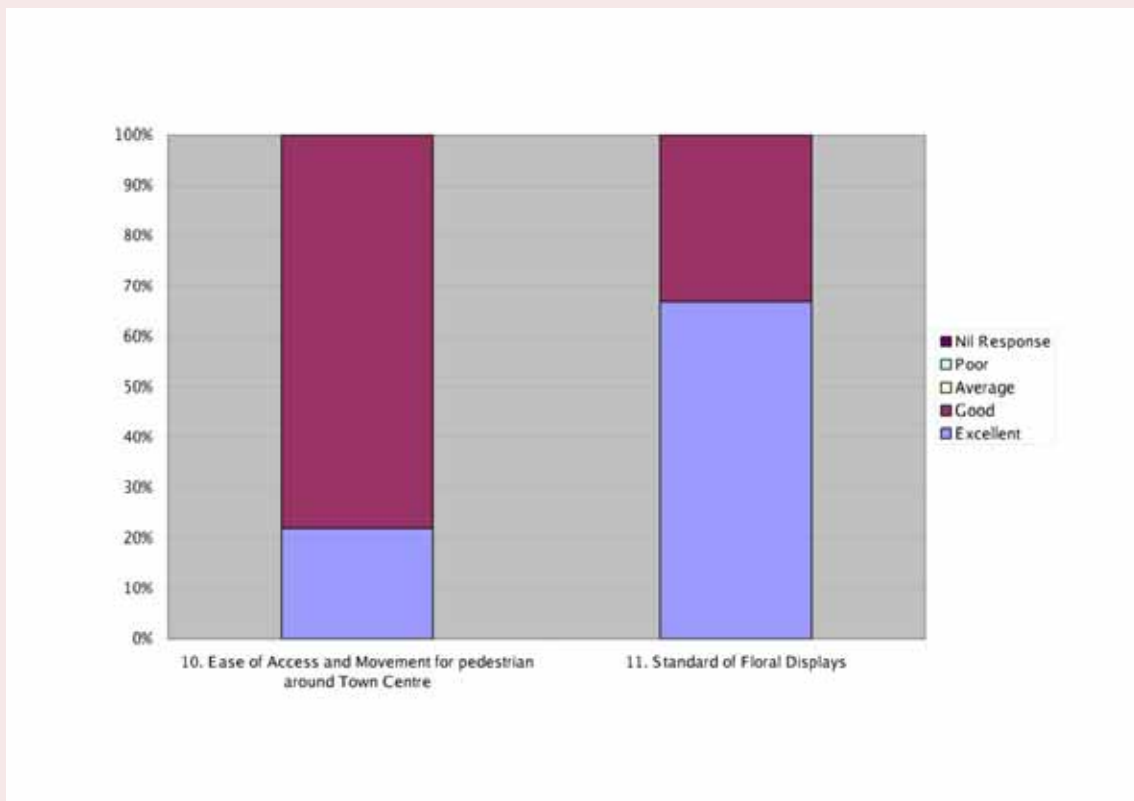
Hygiene



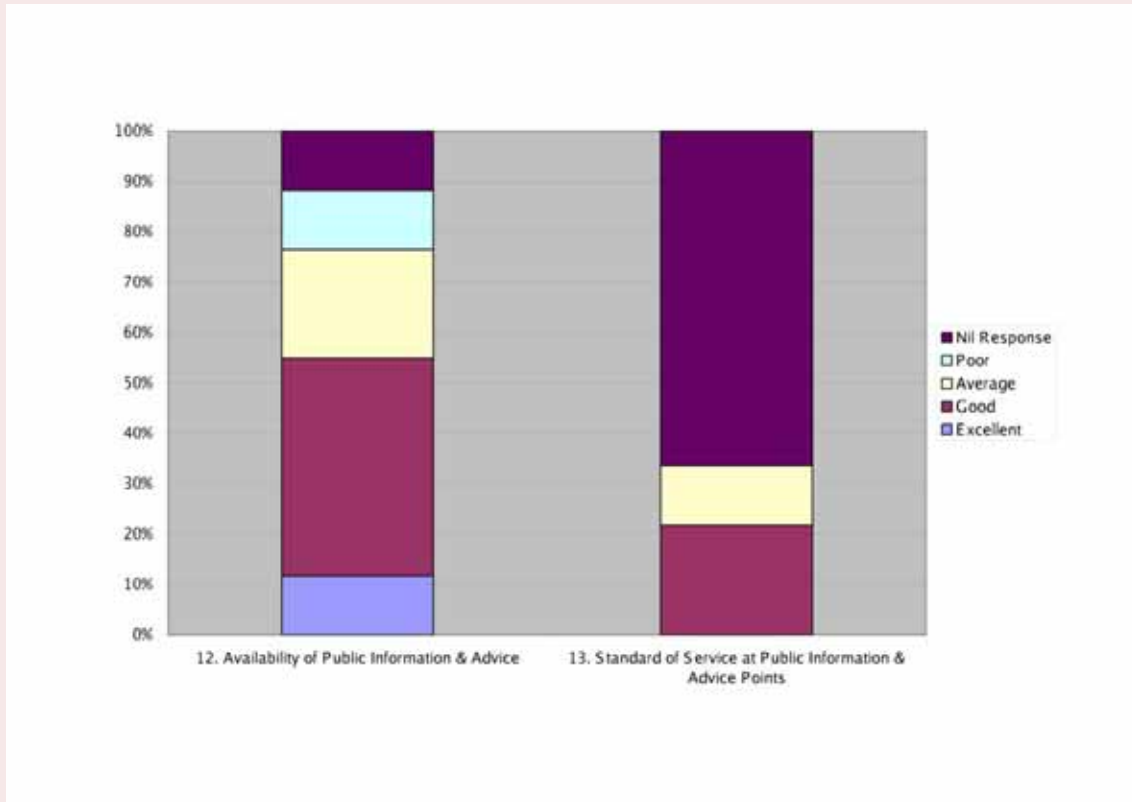
Street Furniture



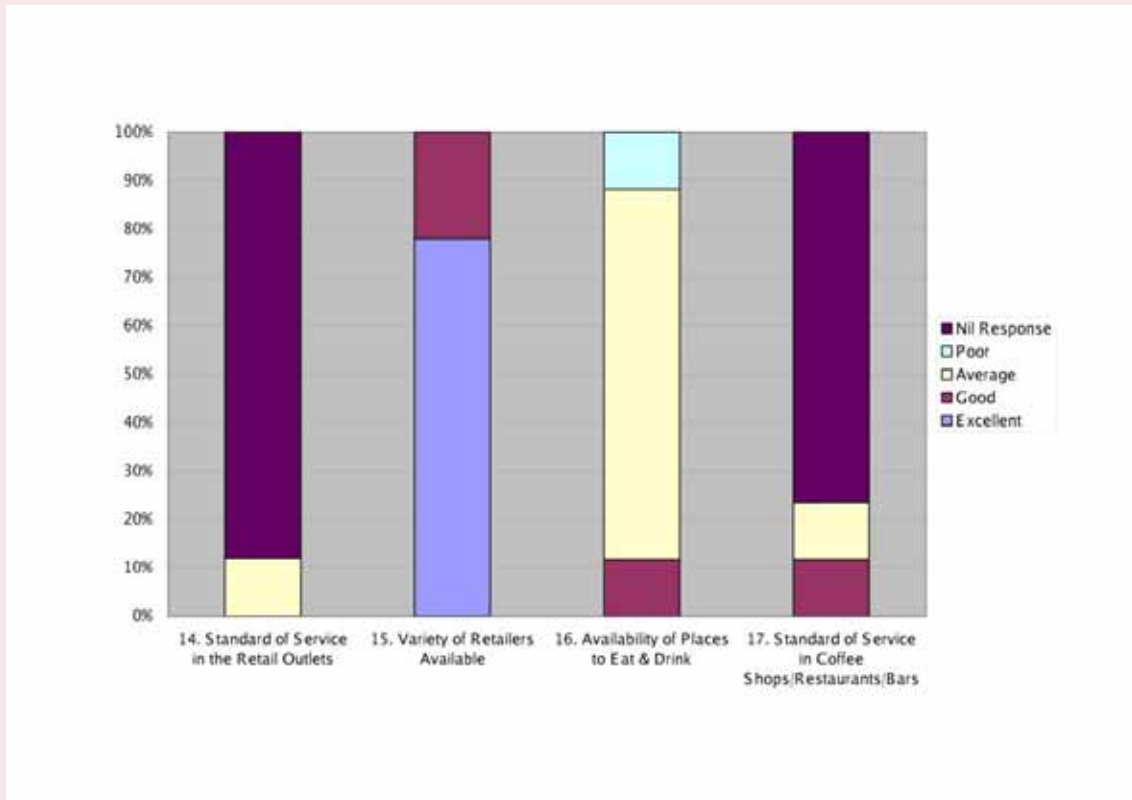
Pedestrian Environment



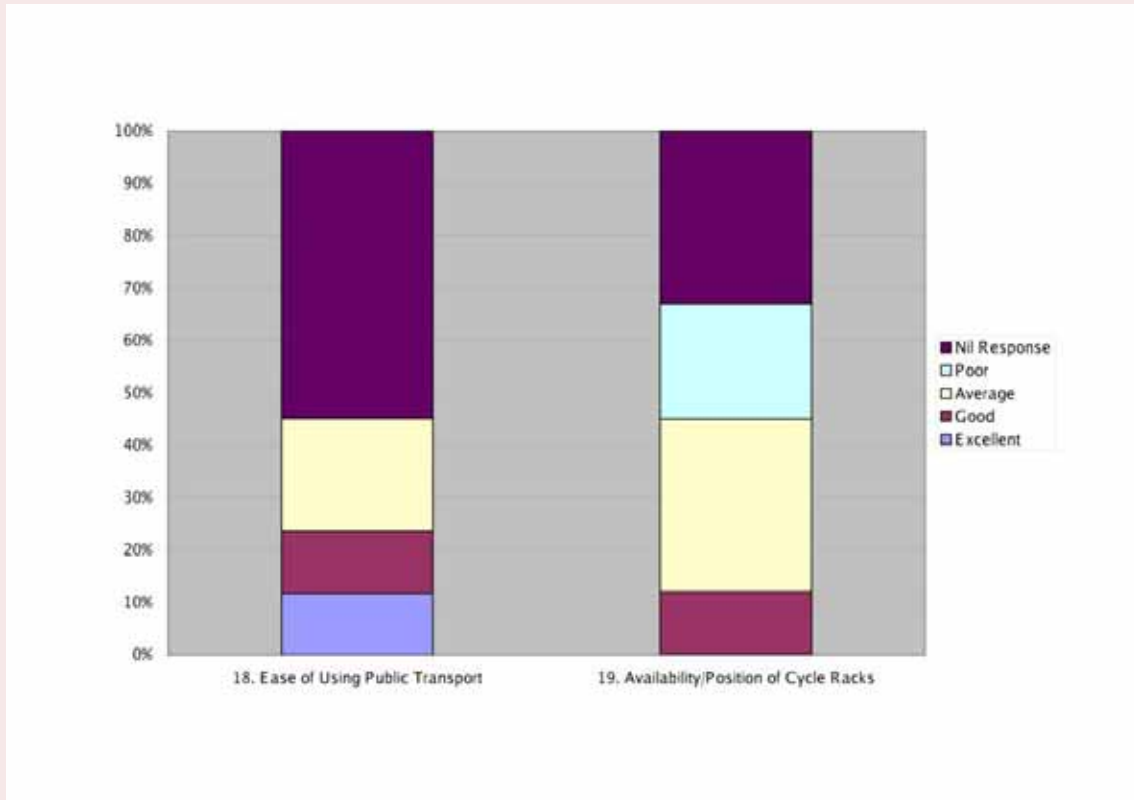
Public Information



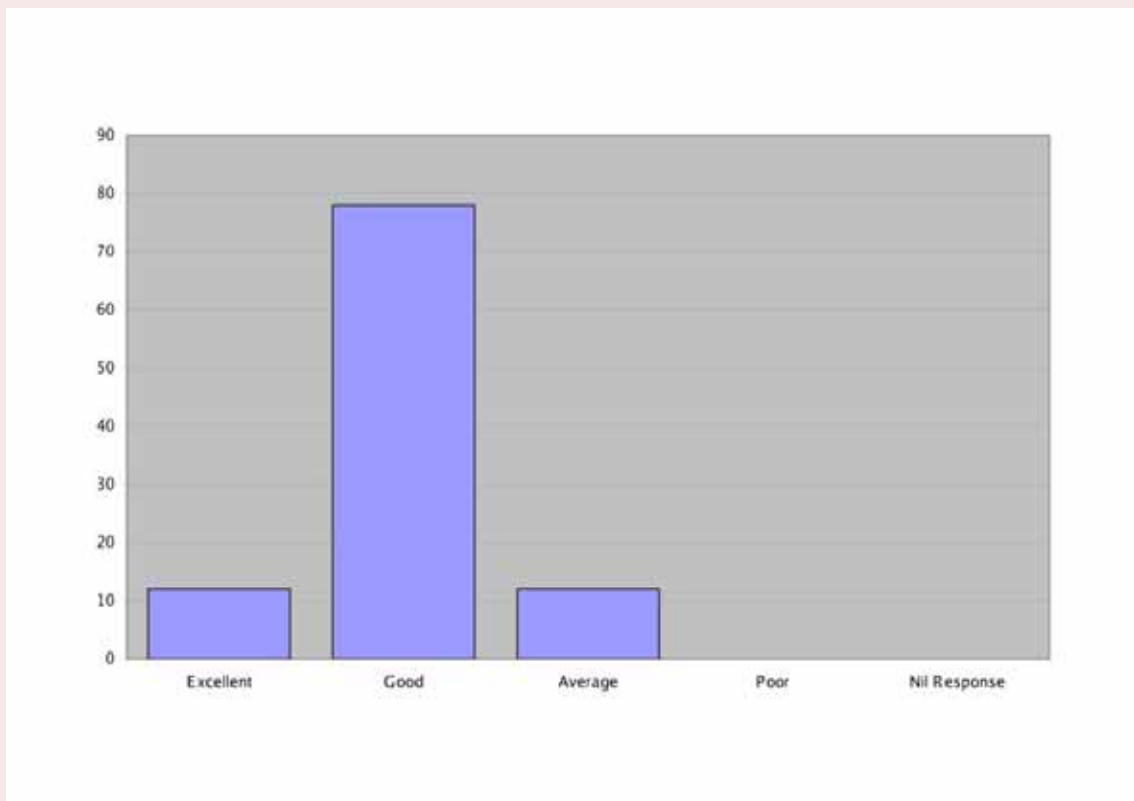
Retailers



Public Transport



General Atmosphere



Summary of Audit

6.3 In terms of accessibility to the town centre, the majority of responses were either good or average with only a few respondents rating the gateways / impression of the town centre as poor. Generally the availability of car parking spaces was good, although some respondents rated the signage to the car parks as poor.

6.4 The standard of hygiene within the public facilities, and within the town itself was rated as good or excellent. However, as with the car parks, there were mixed views as to the quality of the signage to the facilities, with some respondents rating this as poor.

6.5 The street furniture and pedestrian environment were rated highly by the auditors with many rating the environment as good and a majority rating the standard of floral displays within the town as excellent.

6.6 The availability of public information and advice again brought a mixed response, although the standard of service from the information points was generally well received from those who appraised the service.

6.7 In relation to the retailers that exist within the town, the auditors overwhelmingly felt that the variety of retailers was excellent within the town. However, the variety of places to eat and drink within the town was only classed as average. The service of the retailers was not commented on much by the auditors, suggesting that not many entered the premises.

6.8 The ease of using public transport was generally well received, however the availability / position of cycle racks within the town received more 'poor' responses.

6.9 Overall, the auditors thought the general atmosphere of the town was predominantly good, with no respondents feeling that the centre had a poor atmosphere and some thinking it was excellent.

6.10 There were a number of plus points raised by the auditors, such as the variety of retailers within the town, the street furniture and floral displays and the general atmosphere. However, the auditors also highlighted a number of areas for improvement, which included signage to facilities and car parks and also the availability and position of cycle racks within the town.



7 Transport

Transport in Kidderminster

7.1 Kidderminster is relatively easily accessible by both public and private transport. A new and improved bus station was developed as part of the Weaver's Wharf scheme. Bus services connect Kidderminster to all the nearby larger towns, as well as surrounding residential areas. Kidderminster is also served by a railway station which is located within walking distance of the town centre. This provides direct links to Birmingham and Worcester.

7.2 In terms of private transport, Kidderminster Town Centre is readily accessible from two major roads, the A449 (Wolverhampton Road) and the A456 (Bewdley Road) which link the town to the M5 Motorway. However, the area in and around the town centre is frequently congested at peak times, which may be acting as a detractor to visiting the town centre by car. The town is served by a number of public car parks, the largest of which are provided at the Tesco foodstore (approx 500 spaces) and at Weaver's Wharf (402 spaces), the former being free for up to 2 hours. The on-street survey, carried out in February 2006, found that 45% of visitors use their car to access the town centre and that the Pike Mills car park and the Swan Centre car park were the most heavily used at that time.

7.3 The household survey shows that, on the whole, visitors perceive Kidderminster's accessibility by car to be good (only 8% considered accessibility by car to be poor). However, it was identified that additional less expensive, parking would encourage people to visit the town centre more frequently. In terms of public transport there was a fairly even divide between responses of good, average and poor. 53% of respondents answered 'Don't know' to this question suggesting that they do not use public transport. The survey indicates that more frequent and cheaper public transport would encourage more visits to the centre. In general, accessibility to the centre by foot was considered to be good (38%).

7.4 The on-street survey within the town centre also confirms that the main mode of transport used to access the town centre is the car. However, this survey indicates a relatively high proportion of visitors access the centre by foot (22%).

7.5 The centre provides a relatively safe and accessible pedestrian environment, particularly given to the extensive pedestrianised area focused around High Street, Vicar Street, Worcester Street and Market Street. The Swan Shopping centre and Rowland Hill Centre provide safe, covered shopping environments. The majority (61.8%) of those surveyed as part of the household survey indicated that the centre provides a 'good' level of pedestrian movement. However, at the boundaries of the core shopping area there are several road junctions that present significant barriers to pedestrian movement between the town centre and surrounding areas including some of the key public car parks. These are New Road/Oxford Street, Prospect Hill/Worcester Street, and Blackwell Street/Coventry Street. Pedestrian access between the town centre and the residential areas which lie on the other side of the Ring Road is also hampered by the relatively few crossing points available.

Car Parks Evaluation

7.6 As part of the Brief for the 2006 retail study the consultants were asked to consider the extent to which car parking provision within Kidderminster town centre has changed as a result of the Weavers Wharf development and the extent to which the current level of car parking provision meets the requirements of visitors to the town centre. Information has been provided by the LPA relating to the physical changes in car parking provision in the centre in recent years and questions in both the household shopping survey and the town centre visitors survey provide information on how town centre visitors access the centre and views relating to the adequacy or otherwise of the car parking provision.

7.7 The above information is supplemented by the consultants assessment of the comparative levels of usage of the various town centre car parks gained through field work. That assessment is based on observation of the general proportion of space use within individual car parks at different times of the day rather than any systematic, empirical techniques for counting/measuring vehicle movements and length of stay. . It can be seen that the most heavily used of the car parks on the day surveyed (a Saturday) were those at Pike Mills/Batemans Yard, Market Street, Tesco and Weavers Wharf. There was noticeable underutilisation of the following car parks- Comberton Place, Swan centre, Bromsgrove Street, Lion Street and Prospect Lane.

7.8 Turning to the results of the other surveys (household shoppers and on-street), we conclude that:

- While it is difficult to compare exactly the results of the 2000 household shopping survey with that of 2006, fewer respondents in 2006 consider the adequacy of the parking provision in Kidderminster to be good compared to the result in 2000;
- Some 21% of the respondents to the on street survey in Kidderminster consider that the car parking provision in the town centre is worse than in other towns (while some 37% consider it to be about the same as elsewhere);
- Some 37% of respondents to the street survey consider the car parking charges in Kidderminster town centre to be worse or much worse than elsewhere , compared to 32% who consider that they are about the same;
- The most frequently used car parks in the town centre by respondents are the “Aldi” car park (off Green Street) and the Swan centre and some 21% of the respondents indicated that they had difficulty in obtaining a car parking space on the day of the visit;
- Within zone 1 of the household shopping survey, some 35% rated the adequacy of car parking arrangements as poor (compared to 26% who rated them as good).

7.9 Our observation of how the car parking within the centre is being used suggests that certain car parks are more heavily patronised than others and that the level of usage of individual car parks is not necessarily price or quality sensitive. For example, the Pike Mills/Batemans Yard car park is consistently heavily used whereas the Swan Centre car park is better quality and slightly cheaper for the first two hours yet is not as heavily used. Accessibility to the town centre shopping area is better from the Swan Centre Car Park. The Bromsgrove Street car park is noticeably less well used than the Pike Mills/Batemans Yard car park even though it is as accessible from the town centre Ring Road and is closer to the prime shopping frontage than the Pike Mills/Batemans Yard car park. This suggests that further detailed research is necessary regarding car parking use which focuses on influential matters such as changes to pricing regimes and the views of car park users on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the various

car parks through a bespoke questionnaire. Also issues relating to the signing of car parks may need to be examined in more detail to see if that influences the choice of car parks used. That research is beyond the scope of this retail study.

7.10 In general terms, based on our experience of auditing the vitality and viability of towns throughout the UK, we do not see any overriding evidence that the overall level of car parking provision to serve the town centre of Kidderminster is deficient to the extent that would justify the use of scarce town centre sites exclusively to build additional car parking spaces. It is more a case of exploring ways to ensure a more balanced use of the existing provision, perhaps through differential pricing and methods of signing. However it will be important to ensure that in accommodating the forecasted growth in retail floorspace within town centre and edge of centre locations, appropriate levels of new car parking provision are made as a part of the development, so that the overall level of provision in the town centre is not reduced to the point where significant and noticeable shortfalls become apparent.

Town centre Car Park Usage Survey

7.11 As part of the evaluation of the Car Parks within Kidderminster the consultants undertook a usage survey of all of the main sites. This section provides the information that was gathered during the site visits. The audit was undertaken on Saturday 23rd September. The weather conditions on this day were overcast, clearing in the afternoon; dry and blustery throughout the day. For the purpose of the evaluation the following time frames were used:

- Short stay: 1-2 hours
- Medium stay: 2-3 hours
- Long stay: All Day

Weavers Wharf Car Park



1. Pike Mills Pay and Display Car Park

- Total Spaces: 260
- Short stay: 50
- Medium stay: 78
- Long stay: 132

7.12 Pike Mills car park is clearly a popular pay and display facility offering clearly painted, well spaced parking bays in a central, accessible location that lies south of the primary shopping area. The car park is spacious and easy to navigate. An Aldi store lies directly adjacent to the car park to the west, with a Morrison store located to the east which makes the car park an attractive prospect for convenience shoppers throughout the day. The car park is warden patrolled on a Saturday.

7.13 Usage:

Table 7.0.1

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
9.30 am	70%
1.00 pm	90%
3.15 pm	95%

2. Batemans Yard Pay and Display Car Park

- Total Spaces: 50

7.14 Situated directly east of Pike Mills Pay and Display, Batemans Yard is a significantly smaller car park providing additional convenient parking facilities particularly for shoppers at Morrisons. The car park’s limited size ensures parking opportunity is at a premium, while the footfall caused by the supermarket means navigating the car park safely is made increasingly difficult at busy periods.

7.15 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
9.35 am	90%
1.10 pm	99%
3.20 pm	95%

3. Kidderminster Train Station Car Park

- Total Spaces: 200 (estimated)

7.16 The Train Station car park is a large pay and display car park with clearly painted, diagonal parking bays. The car park is seemingly unpatrolled by wardens however there is CCTV surveillance present. The car park is for rail users only. Its long layout and clear directional markings make the car park easy to navigate, while the diagonal spaces maximise the use of the parking area available.

7.17 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
10.20 am	50%
1.30 pm	100%
3.30 pm	95%

4. Comberton Place Car Park

- Total Spaces: 80 (estimated)

7.18 Comberton Place Pay and Display is situated just off Comberton Hill district shopping centre. The car park shows no sign of being warden patrolled and there is no sign of CCTV surveillance however natural surveillance is high as the car park is overlooked by a newly built apartment development, Kidderminster Magistrates Court, an auction house and a surgery. The car park appears underused despite appearing well maintained. The parking bays are brightly painted, the layout provides good navigational space and there is good disabled parking provision. Its location may deter shoppers who seek to utilise the car parks closer to the primary shopping area.

7.19 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
10.30 am	15%
1.25 pm	20%
3.35 pm	65%

5. Market Street Car Park

- Total Spaces: 90 (estimated)

7.20 Market Street Pay and Display is situated in a very central location adjacent to Kidderminster College. This small car park offers a limited amount of parking spaces and is warden patrolled. The parking car park appears well maintained with clear, brightly painted parking bays; it has a good layout leading to one entrance/exit. The car park's central location and accessibility means that it is very popular and thus very busy throughout the day.

Furthermore, the car parks one hour maximum stay period means there is a high volume of vehicles utilising the car park. It has dedicated spaces for motorcycle parking as well a very good disabled parking provision.

7.21 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
10.45 am	90%
1.40 pm	100%
3.45 pm	90%

6. Tesco Car Park

- Total Spaces: 552

7.22 Tesco is serviced by a very large privately controlled car park. The car park is camera controlled offering 2 hours free parking a day. The car park’s use is not restricted to just Tesco shoppers and its location close to the town’s primary shopping area ensures that it is very popular with most car-borne visitors to the town, meaning the facility is very busy throughout the day. The car park has a good layout with clear directional signage and brightly painted bays that are ‘zoned’ (colour coded) to help users find their cars upon their return. The car park is easy to navigate and there is good disabled and mother and toddler provision.

7.23 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.00 am	99%
1.50 pm	99%
3.50 pm	99%

7. Weavers Wharf Pay and Display

- Total Spaces: 402

7.24 The Pay and Display car park at Weavers Wharf’s primary purpose is to serve as a facility for the shoppers at the new Weavers Wharf development. Its central location however means that the car park is very popular for visitors looking to shop within the whole primary shopping area. The car park is large, well maintained with clearly painted parking bays, directional signage and markings that aim to control the through flow of cars (give way stops, directional arrows etc.)

7.25 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.10 am	95%
1.50 pm	99%
3.50 pm	100%

8. Swan Centre Multi-Storey

- Total Spaces: 401

7.26 Accessed via Blackwell Street, the recently refurbished Swan Centre car park is a 6-storey facility that offers sheltered car parking in adjacent to the primary and secondary shopping frontages of Kidderminster town centre. The car park is well lit throughout and has modern payment machines installed on all levels. The stairwell and parking areas are monitored with CCTV surveillance while the car park is warden patrolled. Each level has a different colour scheme as a visual aid to remind returning shoppers where their car is parked. Furthermore, at Level 3 the floor is solely allocated for disabled parking with the Swan Shopping Centre conveniently accessible from this floor via a lift/stairwell. The car park is surprisingly quiet given its proximity to the main shopping area, its relative value and the standard of its facilities.

7.27 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.20 am	30%
1.55 pm	35%
3.55 pm	25%

9. Bromsgrove Street Car Park 1

- Total Spaces: 50 (estimated)

7.28 Bromsgrove Street Car Park 1 is a small gravel-surfaced pay and display located on Bromsgrove Street. The car park is on two levels owing to the steep nature of the site on which it is located. It lacks designated bays. This, together with its loose surfacing and its awkward size and layout of means navigating the car park, especially when busy, can be difficult, potentially hazardous and gives the site poor visual amenity. There appears to be no CCTV surveillance at the car park however the car park is patrolled by a warden at intervals throughout the day.

7.29 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.40 am	55%

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
2.00 pm	70%
4.00 pm	50%

10. Lion Street Pay and Display (Youth Centre)

- Total Spaces: 80

7.30 The Lion Street/ Youth Centre Pay and Display is a spacious car park located to the side and rear elevations of Kidderminster Youth Centre. Overlooked by passing motorists on The Ringway, the car park offers parking opportunities for motorists approaching the town centre from the north. The car park is litter free with clearly painted bays and directional signage. There is good disabled parking provision at the front of the Youth Centre, near the entrance. The town’s main shops are within a short walking distance from the car park to the west via Coventry Street.

7.31 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.30 am	15%
2.05 pm	25%
4.00 pm	5%

11. Bromsgrove Street Car Park 2

- Total Spaces: 400 (estimated)

7.32 Bromsgrove Street Car Park 2 is located opposite the Wyre Forest Glades Leisure Centre and offers a large parking facility to patrons of both the leisure centre and town centre shoppers. The car park has designated parking bays which are colour coded indicating short stay, medium stay and long stay use. The car park is warden patrolled, litter free with a good layout, despite the sloping nature of the site. There are spacious circulatory routes through the car park making it easy to park/navigate. Its location directly behind the primary shopping area make it a viable location to park, both to utilise the leisure centre and shop.

7.33 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.30 am	15%
2.05 pm	25%
4.00 pm	5%

12. Prospect Lane Car Park

- Total Spaces: 80

7.34 The Prospect Lane car park adjoins the Bromsgrove Street 2 Car Park and is a facility for long stay visitors. Parking here is for a duration of 2 hours minimum.

7.35 Usage:

Time (approx)	Indicative Usage (% full)
11.30 am	25%
2.05 pm	50%
4.00 pm	20%

7.36 There are a number of other car parks which were not considered within this study, which would benefit from having an audit undertaken. They are the new Morrisons car park, which improved linkages with the rest of the town centre as part of the application, and also the Matalan car park, located to the west of the town centre.



Appendix A Town Centre Partnership Audit

.1 Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership – Quality Environment Group

.2 Results of initial “surveys” of town centre “public environment”

.3 “COMMON ITEMS”:- IE: BINS, BOLLARDS, CHEWING GUM, FLORAL, ROAD/PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE

.4 (Surveys undertaken between July 2007 and February 2008)

- WFDC = Wyre Forest District Council
- WCC = Worcestershire County Council
- WW = Weavers Wharf

Table .0.1

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
Around the front of the Town Hall	Bins/Cigarette bins	Shortage of bins?	WFDC	
	Bollards	Reconsider the need and location	WFDC / WCC	
	Chewing gum on paving	Remove and encourage people to "bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Fingerpost	Ensure the "locations" link in with the other town centre finger posts	WW	
	Planters/Hanging Baskets	Reconsider the positing of the columns/baskets	WFDC	Sponsorship being looked at to increase offer
	Road Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC	
Weavers Wharf	Bins	Positions and type to be consistent with rest of town centre?	WW	Being reviewed by owners
	Chewing Gum on paving	Remove and encourage people to "bin it"	WW	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Fingerpost	Ensure the "locations" link in with the other town centre finger posts	WW	
	Planters	They are being used as litter bins	WW	Regularly inspected now
Vicar Street	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Bollards	Remove unnecessary bollards	WCC	
	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Fingerpost	Ensure the "locations" link in with the other town centre finger posts	WW	
High Street	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Bollards	Repair / Replace	WFDC / WCC	

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Fingerpost	Ensure the "locations" link in with the other town centre finger posts	WW	
Bull Ring	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Bollards	Repair / Replace	WFDC / WCC	
	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Railing at Mill Street end (Opposite Pub)	Add Flowers to hang from railings?	WFDC / WCC	Sponsorship being looked at to increase offer
Church St	Bin	Located a new bin outside Penny Black?	WFDC	
Blackwell St (Including outside Swan Centre)	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
Worcester St (Pedestrained Area)	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Bollards	Remove unnecessary bollards	WCC	
	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
Prospect Hill	Sign Posts	Repainting Needed	WCC	
	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Pedestrian Signage	Add pedestrian signage to direction of car park	WFDC	
Bridge St	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC	
Oxford St	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC	
Market Street	Bins	Repaint in Kidderminster Burgundy?	WFDC	
	Chewing Gum	Remove and encourage people to "Bin it"	WFDC / Kidderminster College	WFDC to hire a removal machine
	Single Bollard	Remove	WCC	
	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
New Road	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
Bromsgrove St	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
	Bins	Replace damaged bins with standard design and colour	WFDC	

Town Centre Partnership Audit

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
Lion St	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC / WFDC	
Ring Road	Railings	Add flowers to hang from railings?	WFDC	Sponsorship being looked at to increase offer
Church St	Railings at top to Ring Road	Add floral displays / Paint Railings?	WFDC / WCC	Sponsorship being looked at to increase offer
Mill St	Street Signage	Address signage clutter. Replace with wall mounted signs in order to remove posts	WCC	
Park Lane	Railings	Add Hanging Baskets	WFDC / WCC	Sponsorship being looked at to increase offer

.5 Kidderminster Town Centre Partnership – Quality Environment Group

.6 Results of initial “surveys” of town centre “public environment”

.7 “GENERAL ITEMS”

.8 (EXCLUDING - BINS, BOLLARDS, CHEWING GUM, FLORAL, ROAD / PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE)

.9 (Surveys undertaken between July 2007 and February 2008)

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
Around the front of the Town Hall	Street Name Plates	Consider adding Town Crest to the signs	WFDC / Charter Trustees	Authorised to use the coat of arms
	Sign on Town Hall	Does it need cleaning?	WFDC	
	Sir Rowland Hill	Clean Statue	WFDC	
	Surfacing	Surface is wearing out - also different types and colours	WFDC / WCC	
Weavers Wharf	No name has been given to the passage	Propose and agree a name	WW	
	Bridge	Slippery when wet?	WW	Grip strips have been added
	Outside Co-op travel - disabled spaces, equate with dropped kerbs	Needs better signage. Address hatching at rear of some spaces	WW	Car park being redesigned as part of the redevelopment
	Cycle / Motorcycle Bays	Check usage and signing	WW	Car park being redesigned as part of the redevelopment
	Too many "Unauthorised Activities"?	Encourage authorised activities	WFDC / WW	TCM working with police

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
	Triangular Space	No ramp to sunken area. Can more be made of this area?	WW	
	Trees and metal surrounds	Some need attention	WW	
	Towpath Area	Remove weeds etc	BWB	
	Circular Area (Rotunda) Adjacent to TK Maxx	Consider any future use?	WW	TCM prefer to keep as Open Space
Weavers Wharf Bus Station	Usage	It needs to used as the town's bus station - as originally intended	WW / WFDC / WCC	Under Negotiations
	Generally messy	Improve appearance	WW / WFDC / WCC	Under Negotiations
	Lampposts / Shelters / Bins - not red	Repaint in Kidderminster Burgundy	WW	Under Negotiations
	Shelters	Install 'No Smoking' signs	WW	Under Negotiations
Vicar Street	Wooden Seats	Repair and repaint as required	WFDC	
	Fly posting / Graffiti	Remove	WFDC / Private	
	Greengrocer (3 Lions)	Encroaching onto the pedestrian area / "highway"	WCC	WCC dealing with matter
	Plinth	Any proposals welcome	WFDC / Civic Society Heritage Opportunity Group	Floral arrangements for summer (Christmas Tree for winter)
	Bent streetposts	Replace or remove if not required	WFDC / WCC	
	Street Lighting	Clean Lanterns	WCC	
Bull Ring	Crown House	Are there any proposals for its future?	WFDC	
	TJ Hughes - Floral display on canopy	Consider adding floral displays on the canopy	TJ Hughes	
	Traffic Island	Are there any proposals for its future?	WFDC / WCC	
	"Bull Ring" Sign on "Medical Hall"	Is it Original?	?	
	Bus Stop Post	No "Bus Stop" Sign	WFDC	
	Road signs "Trinity Lane"	Repair / Replace	WFDC	
High St (inc front of Swan Centre)	Phone Box	Turn to face the other way	BT	
	"Collapsible Bollard"	Replace - if required	WCC	
	Access road to pedestrianised area from Coventry St / Blackwell St	Are their any proposals for its future?	WCC / WFDC	
	CCTV Conduit (Outside Officers Club)	Needs re-fixing	WFDC	
	Street Lighting	Clean lanterns	WCC	

Town Centre Partnership Audit

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
Blackwell Street (Including Swan Centre)	Railings around bus stops / planted area	Paint and maintain	WFDC	
	Steps / Seating	Seats need to be consistent with the remainder of the town centre	WFDC	
	"Landsaped Area"	Area needs redesigning	WFDC / WCC	
	Swan Centre Car Park wall	Consider ways of making it less "harsh"?	Swan Centre	
	Outside of Bells	No Street Sign	WFDC	
	Tower Buildings	Can more be made of it?	Private	Part now let
	Bottom Rack Hill	Can more be made of it?	WCC / WFDC	
	Telephone Exchange	Eyesore	Private	
	Red Man	Encourage Hanging Baskets	Private / WFDC	
	Shops above Rack Hill	Drab "Papaya" - wall - needs repair	Private	
	Subway	Brighten up	WCC	
Worcester St (Pedestrian Area)	Surface / Paving Slabs	Reset to make it even	WCC	
	Office Signs	Too many Office Signs??> (But private and in keeping)	Private Sector	
	Poor Road Surface	Re surface OR Pedestrianise	WCC	
	Street Lighting	Clean Lanterns	WCC	
Prospect Hill	Roadside bank to Private Car Park	Needs tidying / repaving	Private	
	"Crane Bros" Building Vegetation	Tidy Up	Private	
	Sign Posts	Repainting needed	WCC	
	Bins	Replace damaged bins / repaint	WFDC	
	Pedestrian Signage	Add pedestrian signage to direction of car park	WFDC	
Oxford Street	Former Yates Wine Bar	Reoccupy	?	New license applied for and new business opened
Rear Vicar Street	Service Area	Tidy us this generally "messy" area. Proposed adding planters on railings by riverside	WFDC / WCC / Private Sector	
	River	Improve landscaping	Environment Agency	
	Bridge to rear of Brintons / Entrance to Bus Station	"Soften" the bridge	WCC	
	Drainpipe (Brintons)	Needs repair	Brintons	
	Difficulties crossing from Trinity Land end to Weavers Wharf i.e No pedestrian crossing	Lobby for installation of a new crossing	WCC / TCP	

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
Market Street	Bins	Repaint in Kidderminster Burgundy	WFDC	
	Pavement	Needs cleaning and levelling	WCC	
	Car Park	Insert hatching at rear of Disabled Car Parking Spaces	WW / WFDC	
New Road	Car Park	Needs weeding	WFDC	
	River Stour	Needs weeding / landscaping	Environment Agency / WFDC	
	MCF Complex	Screening / Landscaping required	Private	
	Uneven Pavement	Re-lay paving to make it even	WCC	
	Newsagents	Garage Needs tidying	?	
	Former Toilet Block?? (Is this the brick store used by British Legion?)	Future Use?	WFDC	
	River Crossing (Ring Road Side)	Wall split (dangerous) and Vegetation	WCC / Environment Agency	
Bridge Street	Back of Haven / Roseby's / Iceland	Service area "messy"	Private	
	Site of Green Man & Still	untidy and long term proposals?	?	
Tram Street	Plaque / Info Board		?	
Green Street	Depot	Consider Older Buildings on WFDC move to single site and opportunities	WFDC	
	Street Lamps	Need rationalising (e.g. Two street lamps outside cinema)	WCC	
Dixon Street	Sign board	Custom made Sign Board instead of messy misc signs (Blunts/KWF)	Private?	
Bromsgrove Street	Landscaping	Poor Quality	WFDC	
	Back of shops to Worcester Street	Tidy Up	Private?	
	Recycling Centre Signs (Youth House)	Sign needs resiting	WFDC	
	Health Centre / Youth House	Landscaping needs "softening"	WCC	
	Main Car Park	No pedestrian sign posts (e.g. To Town Centre)	WFDC	
	Former Barrel Pub	Can anything be done?	WFDC / Private	
Lion Street	Youth House	Landscaping / Softening required	WCC	
	Car Park	Reduce signage clutter	WFDC	
	Floral Displays	Encourage window boxes and hanging baskets in area	WFDC / Private	
Coventry Street	Cheshire's brick wall to ring road	Needs "Softening"	Private	

Town Centre Partnership Audit

Location	Item	Issue	Who	Comment
	Bike Stand (Outside Whittle Office)	Repaint in Kidderminster burgundy	WFDC	
Waterloo Street	Can anything be done to brighten it	Consider development improvement scheme	WFDC / Private	
Ring Road	Canal Wharf by Baxter Statue	Provide Interpretation / Information Board	WFDC	
	Richard Baxter Statue	Needs repair / Cleaning	WFDC	
Church Street	Heritage	Provide Interpretation / Information Board	WFDC	
	Proposed residential development at top	Add Hanging Baskets	?	
Mill Street	BT Building	Untidy Car Park / weeds / wall needs repair	Private	
	Outside Infirmary	Posts with no sign	WCC	
	Wall - at top of road	Needs tidying - could a feature be made	?	
	Footpath at bottom (By Lisa Shepherd)	Reset paving to make it even	WCC	
Park Lane	Sainsbury Junction	Poor signing from some directions	WCC	
	Matalan	"Soften" appearance?	Private	
	Rock Works	Provide Interpretation / Information Board	WFDC	
	Scrub land / Town Park	Any latest proposals?	WFDC	
Crossley Park	Car Parks	Seem ok but some trees need replacing (e.g. Outside The Range) needs checking re: access issues	Private	
	Information boards Canal / Carpet Trades	Provide Interpretation / Information Board	WFDC	
Castle Road	Information Board	Provide Interpretation / Information Board	WFDC	
Tesco Area	Lighting	Not in Kidderminster Burgundy	Tesco	