



# Town Centre Audits

Newent  
2020/21



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# I. Introduction

Town and City centres are complex places that serve a wide range of people and purposes. The importance of healthy vibrant town centres has been highlighted in recent years. In certain locations, due to the effect of vacant shops and a perception among some that their towns are not providing them with all the services they need or want, there has been found to be a negative impact on people's quality of life.

Town centres, and those who operate in and manage them, have to adapt to changing circumstances as global issues impact on local conditions. Similarly, local authorities are also having to adapt to rapid changes in the fiscal climate and increasingly challenging budgetary constraints.

As with any change process, it is important to be able to measure where we are, monitor progress, learn from others and realistically compare and measure performance. This report aims to record key sets of data/evidence that can be used by those with an active interest in improving the experience and vitality of town centres, so that they in turn provide a healthy sustainable environment for the businesses and communities that depend on them.

The data presented in this document reflects the 12 month period following the previous report (July 2019 to July 2020). However due to the National Lockdown some data was collected post this timescale and as such has been included in this report to enable a full picture to be presented.

## I.1 Successful Town Centres

This report follows the guidelines/suggestions laid out in the '[Successful Town Centres](#) – 'Developing Effective Strategies: Indicators Toolkit'. The document was launched by the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership in March 2013.

This report presents key findings which can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of Newent town centre. It focuses on key themes such as footfall, vitality and economic characteristics to highlight emerging trends so that strategic actions can be taken to enhance the town centre performance.

The toolkit advises that a number of indicators are assessed. This report monitors the following indicators:

- Footfall
  - Car Parking
  - Retail and Commercial Offer
  - Trader Types
  - Culture and Leisure Offer
  - Events
  - Reported Crime
  - Markets
  - Charity Shops
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- Vacant Shops
  - Town Centre Investment
  - Evening/Night Time Economy

The town centre performance toolkit aims to monitor the performance of the town centre by collecting data on various themes which are reviewed annually, enabling a comparison of town centre performance.

It is suggested that this report be updated on an annual basis to provide a year on year indication of the health and viability of Newent town centre.

It should be noted that the purpose of this document is not to address the future needs of the town centre, but an audit to provide information for annual comparisons. The aim is to provide a range of data sets for the reader to interpret.

## 1.2 Covid-19

Since March 2020, the world has been dealing with the Covid-19 Global Pandemic. The effects of this virus will be felt for many years across a multitude of areas. We have tried to capture the initial impact it has had on the town centre in this report.

It is important to note the following key dates which record public movement/trading restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic up to the end of the reporting period:

- 23 March 2020 - UK Government declares National Lockdown. Closing all non-essential stores and the entire hospitality sector
  - 10 May 2020 - First easing of England's lockdown, (public allowed to leave the house to exercise more than once a day.)
  - 1 June 2020 - Lockdown measures eased with school children in reception, year 1 and 6 returning to school
  - 15 June 2020 - High Street stores reopened (excluding hospitality, beauty and hairdressing sectors)
  - 4 July 2020 - Remaining business sectors reopened
  - 24 July 2020 - UK Government announces mandatory use of masks in England
  - 3 August 2020 - Eat Out to Help Out scheme launched
  - 1 September 2020 - First day of school term for Gloucestershire
  - 24 September 2020 - 10pm Curfew in England began
  - 14 October 2020 - The Government introduced the Three Tier System
  - 31 October 2020 - The Government announced a 4 week lockdown ending 2 December 2020
  - 2 December 2020 - England returned to the Three Tier System with a Fourth Tier added later in December 2020
  - 4 January 2021 - The Government announced a full lockdown
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- 8 March 2021 - Schools in England returned (step 1a of the COVID Recovery Roadmap)
  - 29 March 2021 - Rule of 6 (outdoor) reintroduced (step 1b of the COVID Recovery Roadmap)
  - 12 April 2021 - England moved to step 2 of the COVID Recovery Roadmap
  - 17 May 2021 - England moved to step 3 of the COVID Recovery Roadmap
  - 19 July 2021 - England moved to step 4 of the COVID Recovery Roadmap

Forest of Dean District Council and the Town Council took steps to ensure the safety of the town's residents whilst maintaining business operations.

Community efforts saw the town centres and shopping habits change within the first few months of the pandemic as shown in the Town Centre Report from 2019-2020.

To offset the effects of COVID-19, in 2020 Central Government introduced rate relief, furlough, VAT relief and business grant schemes to help with the recovery of the economy and the high street.

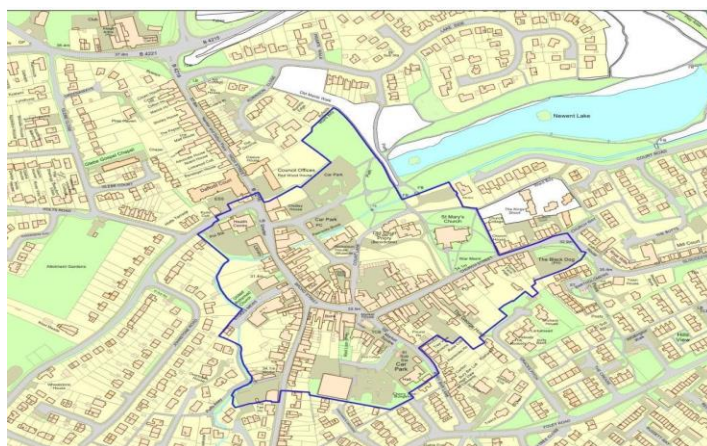
The Forest of Dean District Council received the following ERDF funding to assist the Town and Parishes in their recovery:

- Reopening the High Street
- Welcome Back Fund
- Contain Outbreak Management Fund

£35m has also been distributed to businesses under Forest of Dean District Council's Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme.

### 1.3 Newent Town Centre Boundary

The designated Town Centre Boundary is shown below (boundary outlined):



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## 2. People and Footfall

The Local Insight profile commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council in 2016 indicated that the population of Newent was 10,330 at this time.

This report recognises that since this date, the housing development in each of the Towns within the Forest of Dean may have affected these figures.

The overall aim of obtaining this data is to provide an assessment of who comes to visit the town centre.

The town centre's car parking (in and around the town centre) is included to account for the fact that a large proportion of visitors to many town centres still travel using their own means of private transport in a similar way to how they would visit out-of-town shopping centres.

### 2.1 Footfall 2013 to 2020

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

2.1.2 The information below provides a summary of the 10 minute footfall counts for 2020-2013, 2009, 2008 and 1999. The 10 minute average has been calculated across the whole week (weekday and weekend counts).

2.1.3 It should be noted that different methodology was used to collect data for footfall counts in 1999 and 2008/2009.

2.1.4 The methodology used in 2013 and onwards is as per the guidance stated in the 'Successful Town Centres – Developing Effective Strategies: Indicators Toolkit'. The methodology stated in this document should be used to repeat the data collection on an annual basis. Data was collected in one location on a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday for 1 hour starting at 10.30. Footfall was recorded for both sides of the street, noting people walking either direction.

2.1.5 The table below shows the results of the footfall counts for each recorded year up to 2020. The 2019-2013 footfall counts were recorded on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The 2009 footfall counts were recorded on Monday and Saturday. The 2008 footfall counts were recorded on Wednesday and Saturday. The 1999 counts were recorded on a Friday and Saturday

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| 2020 | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2009 | 2008 | 1999 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 46   | 56   | 45   | 59   | 51   | 57   | 56   | 57   | 49   | 59   | 56   |

2.1.6 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 counts were carried out over an extended period of 4 weeks and as such the count data for this year is an average of the 4 week duration.

2.1.7 Counts were conducted for an hour and recorded at 10 minute intervals. Counts were taken outside 37 Broad Street.

## 2.2 Footfall 2020-2021

2.2.1 In 2020, funded by ERDF Restarting the High Street funding, Forest of Dean District Council procured new footfall counting software TownCentre.AI. TownCentre.AI is a platform that provides instant town centre footfall and visitor behaviour insights to local government and business improvement districts across the UK.

2.2.2 The methodology into collecting town footfall data has now changed and this approach will be used for a 3 year period April 2021-March 2024 Whilst the previous data was collected manually, the following data has been collected by Artificial Intelligence and GPS data. Therefore, it is not possible to compare the new AI data with the manual footfall counts recorded previously

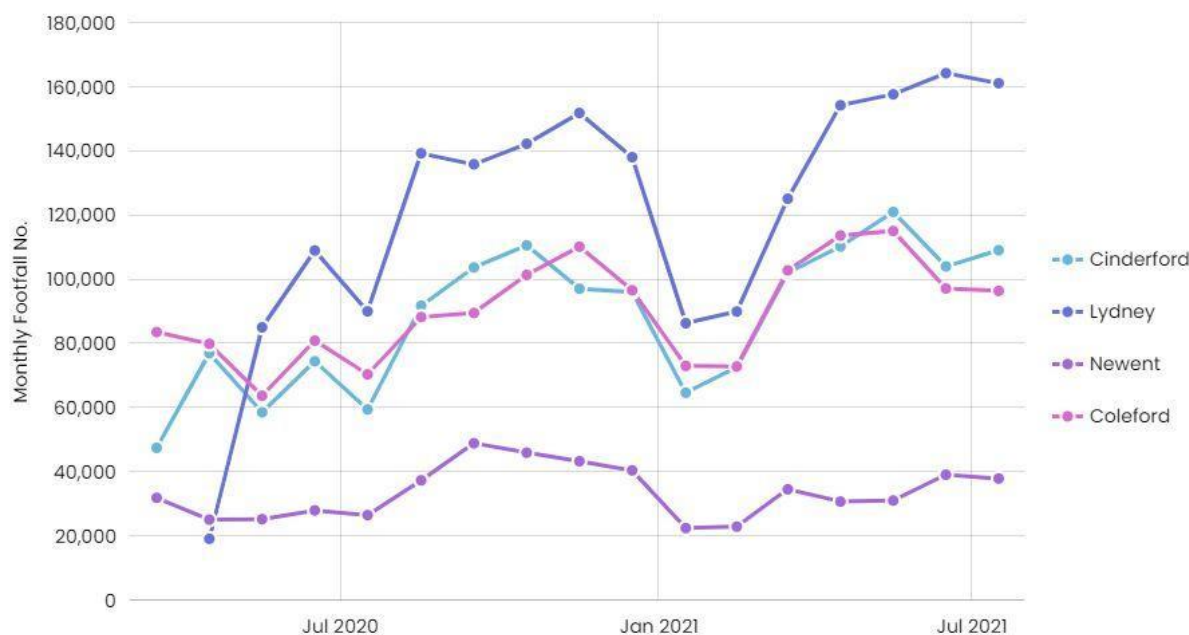
2.2.3 The following data provides information on the total footfall within Newent town centre boundary during the period of June 2020 to July 2021.

| Month          | Total Footfall |
|----------------|----------------|
| June 2020      | 28123          |
| July 2020      | 26636          |
| August 2020    | 37489          |
| September 2020 | 49023          |
| October 2020   | 46117          |
| November 2020  | 43449          |
| December 2020  | 40595          |
| January 2021   | 22620          |

| Month         | Total Footfall |
|---------------|----------------|
| February 2021 | 23063          |
| March 2021    | 34702          |
| April 2021    | 30863          |
| May 2021      | 31209          |
| June 2021     | 39254          |
| July 2021     | 38052          |

2.2.4 The below graph shows Newent footfall from March 2020 to August 2021 in comparison to the other 3 market towns.

## 2.3 Car Parking



2.3.1 This indicator refers to the public car parking usage in and around the town centre.

2.3.2 For many people, the possibility of driving into town and parking their car in a safe car park remains a considerable element of convenience-based attractiveness as it grants them a higher sense of perceived comfort and independence. Many retailers and high street businesses would



tend to agree with this and, in some cases, would prefer for their customers to be able to park near their shop or outlet for ease of access.

2.3.3 Parking plays a significant role in mobility, access and the economic development of a town centre. The town centre car parking market has increased in importance as the market for cars has grown. Cars have become a fundamental element of journey mobility and in consequence parking has followed suit.

2.3.4 Car parking has always been important in regard to mobility, since it's a fundamental element in achieving a high level of accessibility. Many businesses and towns centre see an adequate supply of parking, especially for visitors, as crucial for their competitive growth, yet at the same time, parking is and will remain as the most powerful means of traffic restraint available.

2.3.5 Measuring and monitoring the level of car park usage, along with footfall contribute to a dynamic picture of activity levels in the town centre. Over time, this data can provide the basis of a comparison between actual perceived variances of activity and the impact of initiatives like events, special offers and the arrival or departure of high profile businesses.

2.3.6 The Forest of Dean District Council Cabinet made the decision to implement car parking charges in September 2011, with charging commencing on 1 July 2012.

2.3.7 Car parking charges were increased by Forest of Dean District Council in October 2019 which came into effect in June 2020 (they were due to be implemented in April 2020, however this was delayed due to Covid-19).

2.3.8 The table below shows the recorded monthly figures for tickets purchased within the period of June 2020 to July 2021.

Lewall Street Car Park:

| Month          | NO. of tickets purchased |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| June 2020      | 628                      |
| July 2020      | 2928                     |
| August 2020    | 2600                     |
| September 2020 | 2807                     |
| October 2020   | 3331                     |
| November 2020  | 1839                     |
| December 2020  | 1914                     |

| Month         | NO. of tickets purchased |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| January 2021  | 858                      |
| February 2021 | 1127                     |
| March 2021    | 1549                     |
| April 2021    | 3139                     |
| May 2021      | 2638                     |
| June 2021     | 2975                     |
| July 2021     | 2774                     |

2.3.9 Based on a monthly recording for Lewall Street car park, the average ticket sales for Newent between last year's report and this year has decreased. A fall in tickets will no doubt be due in part to COVID-19 - a reduction in shoppers and shop/hospitality workers meant a reduction in vehicles.

2.3.10 Due to Covid-19, the car park charges were suspended for April and May 2020 however free parking on Saturdays remained until 1 September 2020. In June 2020, Forest of Dean District Council also introduced 5 free short term (30 minutes) parking bays per town. The 5 free bays are still in place.

### 3. Diversity and Vitality of Place

The overall aim of this theme is to provide an assessment of the actual offer of the town centre and its diversity taking an all-inclusive approach that includes daytime, evening and night time economies.

The approach does not differentiate here between the public and private sectors as it is interpreted that both contribute to the provision of services, products and an overall experience for town centre visitors to enjoy and keep coming back to. This theme does not monitor consumer demand, expectations or their perceptions of the offer provided by the town centre.

The 'Diversity and Vitality of Place' section covers the following key items; Retail and Commercial Offer, Trader Types, Culture and Leisure Offer, Events, Reported Crime and Markets.

#### 3.1 Retail and Commercial Offer

3.1.1 This indicator keeps track of the range and variety of retail goods and services offered in the town centre, measured as the change in the number of businesses in each category over a 12 month period.

3.1.2 In order to remain competitive, town centres need to ensure they provide a level of offer that matches the demand of their current (or intended) visitors and consumers.

3.1.3 This indicator is often linked to footfall and levels of business as well as visitor satisfaction. It can also be used (in conjunction with other indicators) to monitor the balance and relationship between the area's daytime and night time/evening economies.

3.1.4 The retail and commercial offer is broken down into Use Class Orders.

3.1.5 On 1 September 2020 the Use Classes Order of 1987 was amended. Please refer to appendix 2.

3.1.6 It should be noted that the number of units recorded sometimes differ between each year. This may be as a result of the division of shop units, vacancies, or very slight variations on the area assessed.

3.1.7 Newent Use Class Breakdown 2021:

| Use Class                   | 2020 | 2021 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|
| E                           | 67   | 69   |
| F.1                         | 3    | 3    |
| Sui Generis                 | 10   | 10   |
| <b>Total Occupied Units</b> | 80   | 82   |

## 3.2 Trader Type

3.2.1 The vitality of a town centre depends highly on the quality and variety of retailers represented. National retail businesses are considered key attractors and are particularly important in terms of attracting visitors and shoppers to a town.

3.2.2 The character and profile of a town often also depends on the variety and mix of independent shops that can give a town a 'unique selling point' and help distinguish it from other competing centres.

3.2.3 Data collected by TownCentre.AI provides a breakdown of National Chain providers versus the independent stores within each of the town centres. The National Chains are indicated below:

| Chain | Category | Subcategory |
|-------|----------|-------------|
| B&M   | Store    | Variety     |

| Chain                     | Category             | Subcategory          |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Betfred                   | Leisure              | Betting Shop         |
| Bonmarche                 | Store                | Clothing             |
| Boots                     | Medical Organisation | Pharmacy             |
| Cancer Research           | Charity              | Charity Store        |
| <b>COOP</b>               | Store                | Grocery              |
| Coventry Building Society | Financial Service    | Bank or Credit Union |
| Greggs                    | Food Establishment   | Food to Go           |
| Lidl                      | Store                | Grocery              |
| Lloyds Bank               | Financial Service    | Bank or Credit Union |
| Tesco Express             | Store                | Grocery              |
| Tesco Superstore          | Store                | Grocery              |
| The Original Factory Shop | Store                | Variety              |
| TSB                       | Financial Service    | Bank or Credit Union |
| William Hill              | Leisure              | Betting Shop         |

3.2.4 As highlighted in the table above, Newent Town Centre features 1 of these national chains out of 82 occupied units.

### 3.3 Culture and Leisure Offer

- 3.3.1 This indicator captures the variety of leisure related services offered in the town centre, including publicly supported services such as swimming pools and theatres.
- 3.3.2 Interaction with other people, cultural activities and a bit of enjoyment not related to a 'to do/buy' lists are some of the many reasons why people come to town centres.
- 3.3.3 This indicator captures this characteristic of town centre activity.
- 3.3.4 The following provides an indication of the cultural and leisure offer within Newent town centre for 2021.

| Facility                 | 2021   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Museums                  | 0  |
| Art Galleries            | 1  |
| Art Centre               | 0  |
| Take Away                | 6  |
| Restaurants and Cafés    | 4  |
| Swimming Pools           | 0 (1 within walking distance of the town centre) |
| Gyms                     | 0 (1 within walking distance of the town centre) |
| Cinemas                  | 0  |
| Theatres                 | 0  |
| Community Halls          | 1 (1 within walking distance of the town centre) |
| Parks/Gardens            | 1  |
| Games Arcade             | 0  |
| Other Specialist Outlets | 2 (Library & Chill Out Zone)                     |

## 3.4 Events

3.4.1. This indicator keeps track of the number of events held in the town centre public realm, measured using local authority's data of event licences awarded over a 12-month period and those held in town centre venues that have a significant impact on footfall.

3.4.2 Events and festivals are a major reason for people to come to town centres. A diverse event offer can be a major source of attraction for visitors as well as local residents, particularly if these events take place throughout the year and are aimed at different audiences (e.g. cultural tourists, business tourists, young people, children, families, ethnic minorities).

3.4.3 Events can make a significant contribution to the local economy and foster a stronger sense of community among residents, promoting pride of place and inclusiveness.

3.4.4 Typically, events may range from small carnivals or fairs, to major cultural festivals, conferences.

3.4.5 Licensed events in Newent over the past year are as follows (date shown is when application was made). It should be noted that many of the usual yearly events were cancelled due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

3.4.6 Temporary Event Notices:

- None

3.4.7 Road Closure Orders:

- None

3.4.8 Premises Licences:

- None

### 3.4.9 Pavement Licences:

- All Seasons Delicatessen (March 2021)

## 3.5 Reported Crime

3.5.1 This indicator monitors the number of reported incidents of crimes in a range of categories in the town centre.

3.5.2 In some cases, fear of crime can act as a deterrent for people not to visit a town centre, particularly in the evenings and at night. Yet, as powerful as perceptions can be in influencing people's behaviour, they are not always directly related to reality.

3.5.3 This indicator will allow its users to contrast these perceptions (captured in the "crime and safety perceptions" indicator) with actual reported crime statistics.

3.5.4 It is important to note that the data included within this section act as an indicator.

3.5.5 The data provides information on reported crime within Newent Town Centre from June 2020 - July 2021.

|                              | Jun 20   | July 20   | Aug 20    | Sep 20   | Oct 20   | Nov 20   | Dec 20   | Jan 21   | Feb 21   | Mar 21   | Apr 21   | May 21   | Jun 21   | July 21   |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Violence and Sexual Offences |          | 2         | 9         | 1        | 1        | 1        | 1        | 2        |          | 3        | 1        | 2        | 1        | 9         |
| Anti-Social Behaviour        | 1        | 4         |           | 1        | 1        |          | 1        | 3        | 1        | 2        | 2        | 3        | 2        | 6         |
| Criminal Damage and Arson    | 1        | 1         |           |          |          |          | 1        | 1        |          | 2        |          |          |          |           |
| Vehicle Crime                |          |           |           | 2        |          | 2        |          |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |           |
| Burglary                     |          |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1        | 1        |          |           |
| Other Theft                  | 2        |           |           |          |          |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |          |          |           |
| Drugs                        |          |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           |
| Robbery                      |          |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           |
| Shoplifting                  |          | 2         | 1         |          |          |          | 1        |          |          |          |          |          | 1        | 2         |
| Other Crime                  |          | 2         |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 2        |          | 2         |
| Public Disorder              | 1        |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          | 1        | 2         |
| Theft from a Person          |          |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           |
| Possession of a Weapon       |          |           |           |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |           |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>5</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>21</b> |

3.5.6 This data is taken from the police UK [website](#). Further information on the crimes committed and the status of the investigations into them can be accessed using the website. Users can select the geographical area they are interested in, click on **Explore the Crime Map** and then search by Type of Crime, Month Reported and more.

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## 3.6 Markets

3.6.1 This indicator monitors the existence of regular markets in the town centre.

3.6.2 Markets, like events, can be a major motivating factor for people to come to a town centre. The presence of a regular traditional market can add diversity to the retail offer of a town centre and can act as a catalyst for other more specialist markets to come to the area, including farmers' markets, artisan markets, continental markets, Christmas markets, night markets, etc.

3.6.3 All of this can contribute to the area's diversity of offer, satisfy a wider range of needs and attract local residents as well as visitors from a growing catchment area.

3.6.4 The National Market Trade Federation has no record of any Markets being held in Newent. It should however be noted that currently there is a sole market trader selling a wide range of items in the Market House on a Thursday. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic these markets were cancelled from March 2020. The market at the Market House returned to trading on 4 June 2020 to December 2021 and then from April 2021 onwards.

## 4. Economic Characteristics

The overall aim in this theme is to provide users with an assessment of static and dynamic elements linked to the economic performance of a town centre. Some of the more 'static' elements, which in turn may influence perceptions, will include changes in the number of charity shops or vacant retail units.

### 4.1 Charity Shops

4.1.1. This indicator monitors yearly changes in the number of charity shops in a town centre.

4.1.2 Over the last fifteen years, the proliferation of charity shops in town centres may have been interpreted in certain circles as a sign of decline. On the other hand, charity shops fill an important gap in the retail offer of any town centre, not just in towns and cities with more modest income catchment areas and/ or ageing demographics.

4.1.3 Charity shops provide a valuable reuse and recycling function, reducing the volume of waste going to landfill and bringing in valuable income for worthy causes. Charity shops are cutting across social and demographic boundaries in attracting customers, providing affordable and specialist items.

4.1.4 Regardless of how the existence of charity shops is interpreted, their growth or decline impacts on perceptions and forms an important element in the monitoring of the economic performance of any town centre.

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4.1.5 This indicator alone can act as a barometer for the impact of strategic decisions on the daytime economy of a town centre.

4.1.6 The information below details the number of charity shops within the town centre for 2021 and previous years.

| 2021 | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2008 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3    | 3    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    |

| 2020   | 2021   |
|--|--|
| Shambles Charity Shop, 22 Church Road                        | Shambles Charity Shop, 22 Church Road                        |
| New Start Cat Rescue Charity, 11 Church Street               | New Start Cat Rescue Charity, 11 Church Street               |
| Great Oaks Dean Forest Hospice Charity Shop, 39 Broad Street | Great Oaks Dean Forest Hospice Charity Shop, 39 Broad Street |

4.1.7 Nationally, some traders report concerns about the proportion of new goods on sale in charity shops. As charities are able to claim up to 80% discount on their business rates, this could be interpreted as unfair competition.

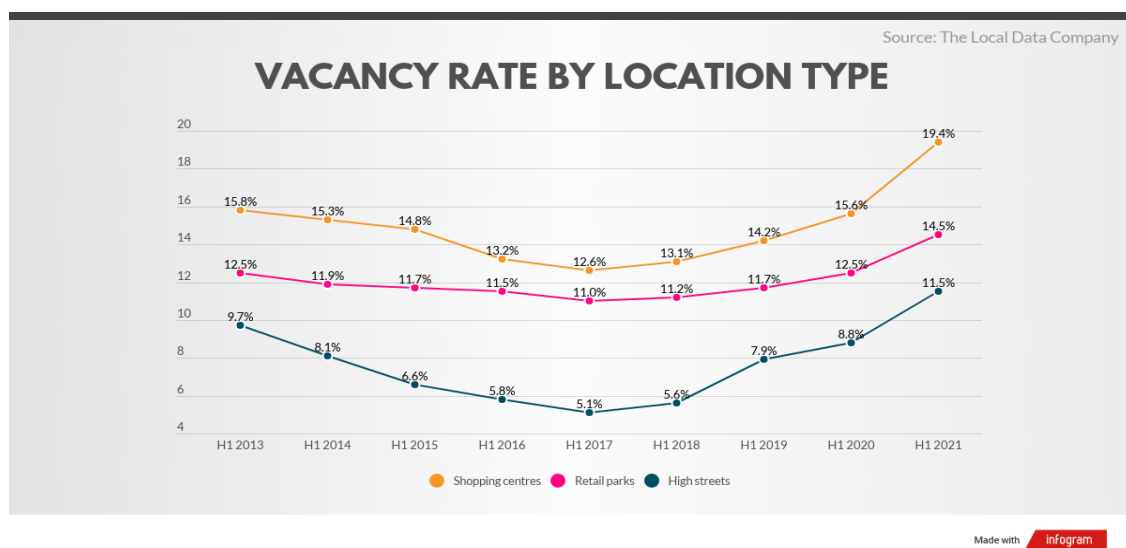
## 4.2 Vacancy

4.2.1 This indicator monitors changes in a town centre's vacant retail units. An increase in vacant retail units in town centres has traditionally been linked to economic decline both locally and nationally.

4.2.2 On the other hand, this could also be interpreted as a temporary opportunity for the town centre to strategically re-balance its visitor offer, and for culture and leisure-related outlets and community services to gain more of a foothold in the town centre.

4.2.3 The graph below shows the national changes in vacancy rates for High Street, Shopping Centre and Retail Parks since 2013 as reported by the [Local Data Company](#). It demonstrates that over the period of 2020 to 2021 the High Streets vacancy rate increased from 8.8% to 11.5%.





4.2.4 Regardless of how vacant retail units are interpreted, their growth or decline forms an important element in the monitoring of the economic performance of any town centre.

#### Newent Vacant Units 2021

| Vacant Unit Quantity | Units Surveyed | %    |
|----------------------|----------------|------|
| 12                   | 94             | 12.7 |

#### List of Empty Units

- 8 Broad Street
- 34 Broad Street
- 35 Broad Street
- 32B Broad Street
- 5A Broad Street
- 21 Church Street
- Shambles Retail Village Church Street
- Shambles Retail Village Church Street
- Shambles Retail Village Church Street
- The Shambles Village Church Street
- 1 Market Square
- Harwood House Market Square

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## 4.3 Town Centre Investment

4.3.1 This indicator monitors evidence of public realm improvements and the level of investment from both the private and public sectors within the town centre of Newent.

4.3.2 The growth of online shopping, rising business rates, and other economic challenges has resulted in many areas with struggling town centres that either have become stagnated or in decline.

4.3.3 In order to revitalise town centres, local authorities must think afresh about the role of the high street and what it provides for local communities. Incorporating new homes, alongside renewed retail, commercial and leisure space can play a key role in building a walking catchment population that can sustain the towns uses more effectively. Proactively leading investment in town centres, through the acquisition and re-purposing of assets such as initiating event programmes and investing in the public realm are crucial ways of creating confidence in places and the right conditions to rejuvenate a town centre.

## 4.4 Evening and Night Time Economy

4.4.1 This indicator monitors evidence of active management of the evening and night time economies in the town centre.

4.4.2 The majority of town and city centres (or at least parts of them) do not go to sleep after the last shop closes for the day. They often have evening and night time economies too, which may vary in size and character from one location to another.

4.4.3 In some areas, this part of the economy forms a crucial part of the service offer.

4.4.4 In many cases, the town centre attracts a completely different demographic of customers in the evening to those who visit the high street during the day time.

4.4.5 It is also worth distinguishing between the evening consumers (5-8 pm often referred to as the 'shoulder period') and the late night consumer, as each can have quite different demographics.

4.4.6 Evidence is building to support the collective and active management of town centres after dark to increase visitor confidence, improve perceptions, prevent crime and disorder, and provide a healthy trading environment for a range of businesses and providers who operate at night.

4.4.7 This indicator enables users to monitor how effectively the evening and night time economies are managed (if they are managed at all) in a town centre.

4.4.8 The retail pathfinder toolkit advises that the Purple Flag recognition system is used. Purple flag is the accreditation scheme that recognises excellence in the management of town and city centres at night. Entertainment areas that achieve the standard will be those that can offer a

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better night out to visitors. Purple flag aims to raise the standards and improve the quality of towns and cities at night.

4.4.9 Newent town centre is not accredited as a purple flag location.

4.4.10 Due to restrictions in place from the Government due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all pubs/clubs and restaurants were put on a mandatory lockdown, unless they served takeaway from 23 March 2020 to the 4 July 2020.

4.4.11 On 24 September 2020, the Government imposed a 10pm curfew on all pubs, restaurants and takeaways. This curfew was lifted upon the reopening of hospitality trade in line with the COVID Recovery Roadmap in May 2021.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 People and Footfall

5.1.1 The footfall data shows a clear indication of how national restrictions affected the high street. From the graph shown in 2.2.4, there was a clear drop in footfall following the national lockdown which was enforced in December 2020.

5.1.2 In June 2019 Town Centre AI recorded visitors to Newent 43,908. In June 2020 just 28,123 visitors were recorded and June 2021 it was 39,254 showing that the high street has not operated at its full potential during this latest reporting period however it is assumed this is largely due to the restrictions and reservations around the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.1.3 Further monitoring in 2021/22 will determine if COVID-19 has had a permanent effect on the high street.

5.1.4 Based on a monthly recording for Lewall Street car park, the average ticket sales for Newent between June 2020 and July 2021 has decreased from 3,426 in our previous report to 2,221 tickets per month. The reduction in ticket sales will no doubt be due in part to COVID-19 - a reduction in shoppers and shop/hospitality sector workers during lockdown and beyond meant a reduction in vehicles.

### 5.2 Diversity and Vitality of Place

5.2.1 The town centre's retail and commercial offer has changed since 1999 and this is consistent with national trends and the variety of ways consumers choose to shop, providing a level of resilience for the town of Newent. We have compared 2020 & 2021 data and the results are very similar with very few variations.

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5.2.2 As indicated in 3.2.4 Newent High Street retained a strong presence of independent and non-national chain retailers.

5.2.3 Due to COVID-19 and governmental restrictions, no licenced events took place during the period June 2020 to July 2021.

5.2.4 The number of reported crimes remains similar to last year with only minor variations within each of the different categories of crime. Violence and sexual offences and Anti-Social Behaviour are the most common types of crime. There was a marked increase in crime in July 2021.

### 5.3 Economic Characteristics

5.3.1 The vacancy rate for 2020/21 has decreased from the previous year with 12 vacant commercial units (at the time of the audit) compared to 16 in the previous period. This equates to a 12.7 vacancy rate which is above the National High Streets Vacancy figure of 11.5% (source: Local Data Company).

5.3.2 It is still unclear the full effect COVID-19 has had on the evening and night time economy in Newent due to governmental curfews and restrictions. However, the 2021/22 report will look to gauge if there has been a lasting effect on the High Street.

# Appendix I

## 6. Use Class List 2021

| No/Name             | Address      | Service                                     | Use Class   |
|---------------------|--------------|---|-------------|
| 1                   | Broad Street | SPAR  | E           |
| 4                   | Broad Street | Crusty Loaf                                 | E           |
| 7                   | Broad Street | The Card Shop                               | E           |
| 8                   | Broad Street | Vacant                                      | Vacant      |
| 10                  | Broad Street | Easy Living Solutions Ltd                   | E           |
| 12                  | Broad Street | RAFT  | E           |
| 13                  | Broad Street | Flowercraft Florist                         | E           |
| 14                  | Broad Street | The Tudor Fish and Chip Shop                | Sui Generis |
| 15                  | Broad Street | Newent Pilates                              | E           |
| 16                  | Broad Street | Smiths of Newent Estate Agents              | E           |
| 19                  | Broad Street | Day Lewis Pharmacy                          | E           |
| 23                  | Broad Street | Country Corner Clothes                      | E           |
| 29                  | Broad Street | Smith's Funeral Services                    | E           |
| 34                  | Broad Street | Vacant                                      | Vacant      |
| The Newent Tandoori | Broad Street | The Newent Tandoori                         | Sui Generis |
| 35                  | Broad Street | Vacant                                      | Vacant      |
| 36                  | Broad Street | The Chillout Zone                           | E           |
| 39                  | Broad Street | Great Oaks Dean Forest Hospice Charity Shop | E           |
| 43                  | Broad Street | Kam Wah Chinese Takeaway                    | Sui Generis |
| 10A                 | Broad Street | VIP Nails                                   | E           |
| 1A                  | Broad Street | Cut Above                                   | E           |
| 21A                 | Broad Street | Pippins Fruit and Veg                       | E           |
| 23A                 | Broad Street | Newent Circle Club                          | E           |
| 27A                 | Broad Street | Premier Express Convenience Store           | E           |
| 27B                 | Broad Street | Snippets Hair                               | E           |
| 32A                 | Broad Street | GMT Computing                               | E           |

| No/Name       | Address       | Service                                       | Use Class   |
|---------------|---------------|---|-------------|
| 32B           | Broad Street  | Vacant  | Vacant      |
| 37A           | Broad Street  | The Artisan Butchery                          | E           |
| 5A            | Broad Street  | Vacant  | Vacant      |
| Library       | Broad Street  | Library                                       | F.I         |
| The Red Lion  | Broad Street  | Bar & Kitchen                                 | E           |
| Memorial Hall | Bury Bar Lane | Memorial Hall                                 | F.I         |
| 1             | Church Street | Newent Kebab & Pizza                          | Sui Generis |
| 2             | Church Street | Gooch Sports                                  | E           |
| 3             | Church Street | Bombay Kitchen                                | Sui Generis |
| 5             | Church Street | GDR Solutions                                 | E           |
| 6             | Church Street | Seymour News                                  | E           |
| 7             | Church Street | Cobblers Small Pub                            | Sui Generis |
| 8             | Church Street | The Patchwork Basket                          | E           |
| 9             | Church Street | Manna Creative Gifts                          | E           |
| 10            | Church Street | All Seasons Delicatessen and Licensed<br>Cafe | E           |
| 11            | Church Street | New Start Cat Rescue                          | E           |
| 12            | Church Street | Ideal Carpets                                 | E           |
| 17            | Church Street | Newent Barbers Shop                           | E           |
| 18            | Church Street | Errol's Courtyard Café                        | E           |
| 19            | Church Street | Jilling's Antique Clocks                      | E           |
| 21            | Church Street | Vacant  | Vacant      |
| 22            | Church Street | Shambles Charity Shop                         | E           |
| 24            | Church Street | Madge Lloyd + Gibson Solicitors               | E           |
| 47            | Church Street | Time Hairdressing                             | E           |
| 13A           | Church Street | Sizzling Wok Chinese Takeaway                 | Sui Generis |
| 13B           | Church Street | AJ Barbers                                    | E           |
| 14            | Church Street | The Stock Exchange – Clothes/bags             | E           |
| 16            | Church Street | Errol's Courtyard Café                        | E           |
| 29/30         | Church Street | Post Office                                   | E           |
| George Hotel  | Church Street | Pub/Hotel                                     | Sui Generis |

| No/Name                         | Address       | Service                               | Use Class   |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Mona's Handbags                       | E           |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Blonde Hair Design & Colour           | E           |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Mancave - Newent Vape Shop            | E           |
| Unit 19 Shambles Retail Village | Church Street | Newent Dog Spa                        | E           |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Vacant                                | Vacant      |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Mayo Property Management              | E           |
| Unit 8 Shambles Retail Village  | Church Street | Boutique No. 8                        | E           |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Wellness Barn                         | E           |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Vacant                                | Vacant      |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Vacant                                | Vacant      |
| Shambles Retail Village         | Church Street | Old Nicks Tattoo and Art Studio       | Sui Generis |
| St Mary's Church                | Church Street | Church                                | E           |
| The Black Dog                   | Church Street | The Black Dog                         | Sui Generis |
| Unit 1 The Shambles Village     | Church Street | Vacant                                | Vacant      |
| Unit 12 The Shambles Village    | Church Street | The Secret Gallery                    | F.I         |
| 2                               | Court Lane    | Total Design Ltd Architects           | E           |
| 3                               | Court Lane    | Redz Health & Beauty                  | E           |
| 4                               | Court Lane    | NDC Dental Care                       | E           |
| 5                               | Court Lane    | Redz Hairdressing                     | E           |
| 3                               | Broad Street  | Ashton and Daniel Optometrist         | E           |
| 1                               | Culver Street | Buttery Tea Rooms                     | E           |
| 20                              | Culver Street | Perpetua Print and Design             | E           |
| 25                              | Culver Street | Newent Blacksmiths Markeys & Sons     | E           |
| The Old Chapel                  | Culver Street | Smiths of Newent Antiques Auctions    | E           |
| 1                               | High Street   | Naylor Powell Estate Agents           | E           |
| 3                               | High Street   | G.D. Parker DIY Supplies and Hardware | E           |
| 4A                              | High Street   | Coventry Building Society             | E           |
| 4B                              | High Street   | Steve Gooch Estate Agents             | E           |

| No/Name             | Address       | Service                     | Use Class |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Good News Centre    | High Street   | Bookshop + Coffee shop      | E         |
| Lewell House        | High Street   | Nico's Hair                 | E         |
| Manchester House    | High Street   | The Co-operative Food       | E         |
| The Golden Combe    | High Street   | The Golden Combe Hair Salon | E         |
| I                   | Market Square | Vacant                      | Vacant    |
| Co-op               | Market Square | Co-op Retail Store          | E         |
| Harwood House       | Market Square | Vacant                      | Vacant    |
| Newent Town Hall    | Market Square | Town Hall                   | E         |
| Wyedean Healthfoods | Market Square | Wyedean Healthfoods         | E         |
| Holts Health Centre | Watery Lane   | Health Centre               | E         |



# Appendix 2

## 7. Use Class Order

The changes amend the Use Classes Order 1987 and take effect on 1 September 2020. This is a guide to the changes in the various Use Classes and the unit types that they represent:

| Use  | Old Use Class | New Use Class |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Shops  | A1            | E             |
| Financial and Professional Services  | A2            | E             |
| Food and Drink   | A3            | E             |
| Business (office, research and development, light industrial process)  | B1            | E             |
| Non-residential Institutions (medical or health services, creches, day nurseries and centres)  | D1            | E             |
| Assembly and Leisure (indoor sport, recreation or fitness, gyms)   | D2            | E             |
| Non-Residential Institutions (education, art gallery, museum, public library, public exhibition hall, places of worship, law courts) | D1            | F1            |
| Shops no larger than 280m <sup>2</sup> (selling mostly essential goods and at least 1km from other similar shops)                    | A1            | F2            |
| Community Hall, outdoor sport/recreation, indoor or outdoor swimming pool, skating rink  | A1            | F2            |
| Public House, wine bar, drinking establishments  | A4            | Sui Generis   |
| Hot Food Takeaway  | A5            | Sui Generis   |
| Cinema, Concert Hall, Bingo Hall, Dance Hall, Live Music Venue   | D2            | Sui Generis   |