

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

Final Report

18 March 2025

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

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Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

1.0 Introduction to Project Team

1.1 The Retail Group Company Background & Credentials

The Retail Group has been developing growth strategies and economic action plans for 'places' (cities, towns, local centres, market towns, historic towns, and streets) for almost 30 years and is at the forefront of helping places to become 'multi-purpose' in offer and use. This includes expansion of the offers and experiences in towns as well as improving use and integration of existing assets. Thus providing consumers with more reasons for being in and visiting a centre, creating stronger 'places' to shop, enjoy, use, live, work and visit.

Over the last two years, The Retail Group has developed comprehensive and coherent action plans to improve the performance, economy and prosperity of over 50 towns, locations and places. This period includes both pre, during and importantly post the Covid impacted and current economic pressured trading environment. It also includes detailed and multi workstream research studies that have identified the challenges, baseline performance, health checks and evidence base to direct individual town / location Action Plan for Growths. The research processes utilised enables the team to get under the skin of each location quickly and effectively, successfully engage with local businesses and stakeholders, understanding its individual future needs and developing bespoke visions, strategies and practical action plans for the short, mid and longer term.

In almost 30 years of providing support to the wider retail, city / town centre and 'place' sectors, the prosperity and sustainability of over 350 diverse locations across the UK has been improved. The team has an unrivalled experience in developing, delivering and supporting the implementation of successful action plans and growth strategies. Included within the project team skill set is the awareness of the trends affecting how consumers choose to use town centres, and how places are evolving to meet the needs of consumers, businesses and demographic trends.

The Retail Group project team is at the forefront of helping places to become 'multi-purpose' in offer and use. This includes expansion of the offers, attracting additional elements, filling gaps, repurposing assets and providing the marketing and promotional content / direction to achieve the growth. Indeed, one of the current core aims for many places and the stated UKSPF objectives, to create and restore local pride and a sense of community in places has been a cornerstone of our work for almost three decades.

We have extensive direct experience of developing growth plans for towns in the region, having prepared growth plans on over 30 towns and villages across North Yorkshire and East Riding.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

2.0 Project Overview

2.1 Project Background and Brief

Kirkbymoorside is situated between two high profile regional towns, and benefits from the surrounding natural landscape, and many visitors to the area. There is a perception that it can be overlooked and that its offer, the town and its experience needs more impact, visibility and promotion.

Two nearby and larger centres have benefitted from 'Town Boost' studies and North Yorkshire Council, along with local businesses and stakeholders are keen for a dedicated action plan to be developed for Kirkbymoorside. The businesses and local community representatives would like to improve the appeal and performance of the market town, for the benefit of local businesses, residents, visitors and all stakeholders. They have not stood still and waited for improvement to happen however. They have identified several opportunities, challenges and areas for improvement. They have previously applied for funding and support to improve the town, which was not successful. However, North Yorkshire Council is now able to provide the support to create an action plan to improve footfall, visits, dwell times and customer experience. There is historic research and engagement to draw on, as well as an engaged and interested local business community.

North Yorkshire Council has commissioned The Retail Group, via a competitive tender process, to undertake a Mini 'Town Boost' Feasibility Study and prepare the resulting Action Plan for Growth. The feasibility study should provide a detailed action plan to improve the appeal, usage and performance of the town centre, based on the evidence and needs of the future customers (residents and visitors) and of the businesses that operate in / near the town.

The study needs to build upon any previous work that has been completed on Kirkbymoorside, including work done by existing business / community groups, Town Council, North Yorkshire Council and regional tourist authorities.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

2.0 Project Overview

2.2 Project Outputs

The objectives of the study are to complete a detailed feasibility study and provide an action plan that will enable Kirkbymoorside to:

- Improve the appeal, usage and performance of the town centre.
- Improve footfall and consumer dwell time in the town centre.
- Improve the overall appeal of it of the town centre, including its impact, visibility and accessibility for residents and visitors.
- Provide a set of actions that can be implemented as and when funds are available, including any short-term quick win actions that can be implemented within current budget parameters / at no or little cost.
- Identify the best delivery mechanism for individual or collective actions and the optimum governance structure for the future town centre management and growth actions.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

2.0 Project Overview

2.3 Project Methodology

The core workstreams of the study are mapped out below:

1. **Immersion** - Included information collation, stakeholder contacts, stakeholder and business survey methodologies, timetable and sequence.
2. **Centre & place review** - Objective in person reviews by The Retail Group town offer, mix, standards, layout, impact, marketing and promotions, environment, shopping experience, integration with surrounding offer / nearby attractions etc.
3. **Survey of businesses** - Objective, independent and confidential survey of businesses trading in the town centre. In person distribution & collection.
4. **Stakeholder engagement** - Individual contact with key stakeholders via email and 121 meetings, with contacts as supplied by client project team.
5. **Resident information and wider policy context** - Review of available customer data, future plans and wider policy context.
6. **Trends and benchmark centres** - Review of emerging trends affecting how consumers use town centres and what this means for Kirkbymoorside.
7. **Conclusions** - Analysis of individual research area findings and collective analysis.
8. **Recommendations** - Optimum future action plan for growth.

Centre & Place Review

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

3.0 Centre and Place Review

3.1 Introduction

Kirkbymoorside is a small market town located in Ryedale, approximately 25 miles north of York.

The town occupies both sides of the busy A170 (mainly to the north) and is approximately equidistant between the thriving market towns of Helmsley and Pickering.

The town is loosely known as the 'Gateway to the Moors', given the very easy access to the beautiful and nearby North Yorkshire Moors. There are several leisure, service and accommodation-based attractions nearby.

The town centre satisfies the frequently bought day to day and weekly convenience food, top up comparison goods, food & beverage and retail services needs of consumers. It has a weekly market on Wednesdays, operated by the team at the Memorial Hall.

The town centre has a charm, as well as rich heritage and many interesting historic buildings.

The rest of this section assesses the mix & layout, environment & customer experience, accessibility and marketing & promotion of the town centre offer.



Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

3.0 Centre and Place Review

3.2 Mix and Layout

There are circa 70 units trading in the town area, with a good mix of convenience, food & beverage and services, supported by some comparison goods. Most of these shops are located on Market Place and Piercy End.

The convenience offer contains a popular village store, Spar convenience store, newsagent, butcher, baker and a pharmacy. The comparison goods offer is reasonable, and includes a giftshop, boutique home decorating shop, two ladieswear, three antiques shops, pets' supplies, dog groomers and appliance shop. The services offer is extensive and includes five hairdressers, three estate agents, post office, two giftshops and artist studio.

There are several daytime cafes / eateries, three public houses but no dedicated evening-oriented restaurants or wine bars. Unfortunately, the town's only fish & chip shop closed recently.

The Wednesday Market is underwhelming, due to limited number of stalls and given it only trades on one day per week. Stalls include a pie and savoury pastry products stall, fruit & veg, fish stall, pet toys / accessories, bread and cake stall, toiletries & household goods. The Memorial Hall also offers a smaller number of additional stalls internally, typically selling food.

There is a cluster of commercial operations on the A170, including a Co-op, petrol station, vets, auctioneers and garden centre. These do however feel disconnected and not integrated within the core town centre offer due to the lack of awareness and wayfinding signage to the core town offer from this location.



Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

3.0 Centre and Place Review

3.3 Environment and Customer Experience

The town centre has a lovely historic feel with many lovely examples of very well-preserved older buildings. Furthermore, it is clean and tidy and well maintained throughout. Its an aesthetically pleasing and appealing place for sure.

The town centre also feels 'green' due to the many well established and maintained trees. There are several planters in Market Place / near the Memorial Hall which all add to the appeal of the place. There are a few benches provided but these could typically do with an upgrade / refurbishment as they are in quite a tired condition.

The Memorial Hall is an attractive asset but in clear need of need of internal and external refurbishment.

There are public toilets available at Town Farm Car Park.

The core town centre area feels smaller than it is, due to the many residential properties located between shops and commercial units. This reduces the impact of the offer as well as the sense of arrival. Cars parked on the cobble stones further reduce the visibility of the shop and commercial offer.



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3.0 Centre and Place Review

3.4 Accessibility & Car Parking

Customers in Kirkbymoorside have several options for car parking, with much inconsistency between them! They include:

- 30 minutes free parking at the Co-op.
- 2 hours free on-street parking on Market Place.
- Paid for parking at Town Farm Car Parking, up to 24 hours, seven days per week. This site also offers free one hour parking between 12.00 and 14.00.
- Free unlimited parking close to the town centre, on adjoining streets including Piercy End, West End and High Market Place amongst many others.

The parking regime is confusing, signage between the various sites is poor and inconsistent and there would appear to be a shortage of short term spaces in the heart of the town centre at all times of the day.

Whilst the town centre is relatively easy to access by bus and car, it feels very remote from the A170 due to poor and ineffective signs. There is no signposting from the A170 such as 'local shops, food and toilets →'. There are a couple of peripheral signs just saying 'Kirkbymoorside' but these are on the fringes of the built-up area, nowhere near the town centre.

Furthermore, there is no 'Welcome to Kirkbymoorside Town Centre' sign at the northern end of Piercy End where it joins Market Place or at the northern end of the town centre by the Community Library.

In short, there are lots of opportunities to improve Kirkbymoorside's sense of arrival and make it an easier place to visit and shop for residents and visitors.



Survey of Businesses

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.1 Introduction

A bespoke questionnaire was developed for the project, based on the required outputs of the brief, and focussed on the core town centre area as well as the businesses on the A170 (distribution area shown overleaf).

Questions in the survey were designed to capture information about the customer base, reasons for using the town centre, current and historic performance, views and opinions of the current town centre offer and how this might be improved. Many of the questions and the survey format are based on previous tried and tested questionnaires and also echo those used in the survey of residents as well as stakeholders.

The questionnaire is attached as Appendix I. We recommend that it is used as the basis for ongoing monitoring of performance and improvement initiatives.

Circa 68 surveys were distributed in person on 29 January 2025.

The survey achieved an excellent response and completion, with 62 completed surveys received, which produces a comprehensive dataset of respondents for robust analysis and interpretation, on which the graphs in this section are based.

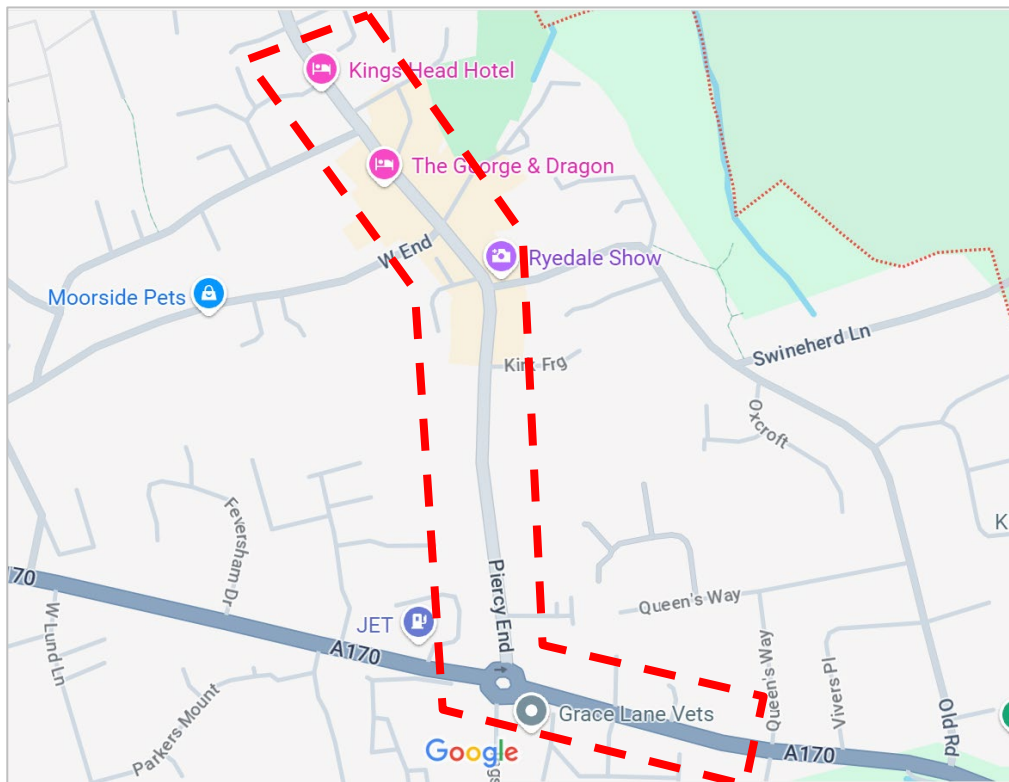
Note: due to multiple response not all graphs total 100%.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.1 Introduction cont'd.

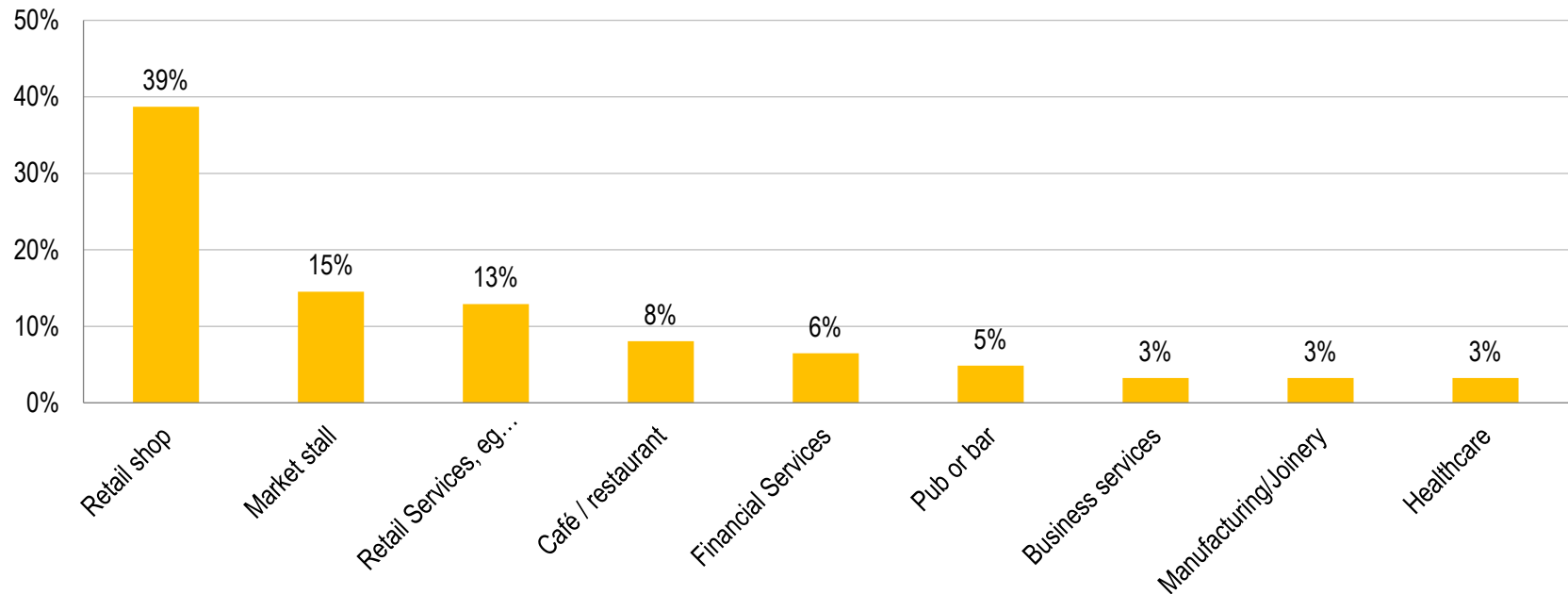
The survey distribution area is shown below.



Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.2 What type of business do you operate?

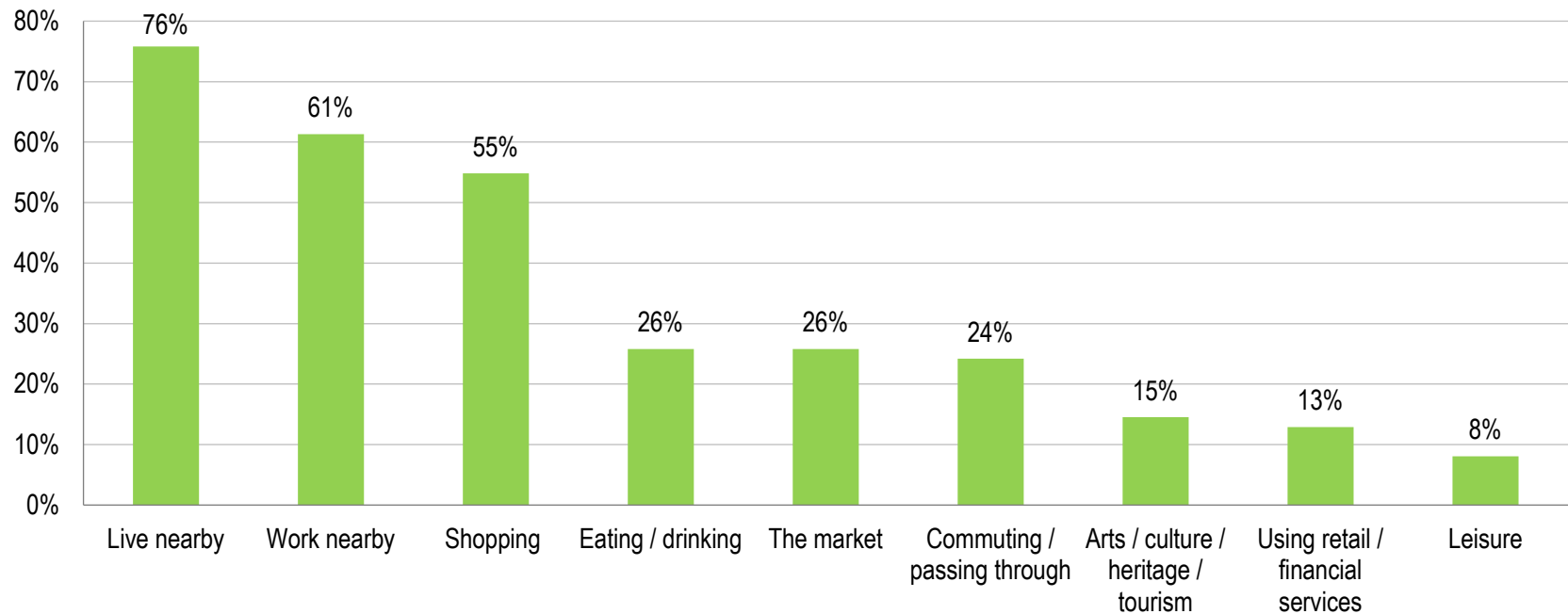


There was a wide range of business types that responded to the survey, with the sample being dominated by retail businesses, but also including market stalls (which also includes those inside the Memorial Hall), retail services, café / restaurants, pubs, financial or business services, manufacturing and healthcare.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.3 In your opinion, what are the main reasons for customers to be in Kirkbymoorside?



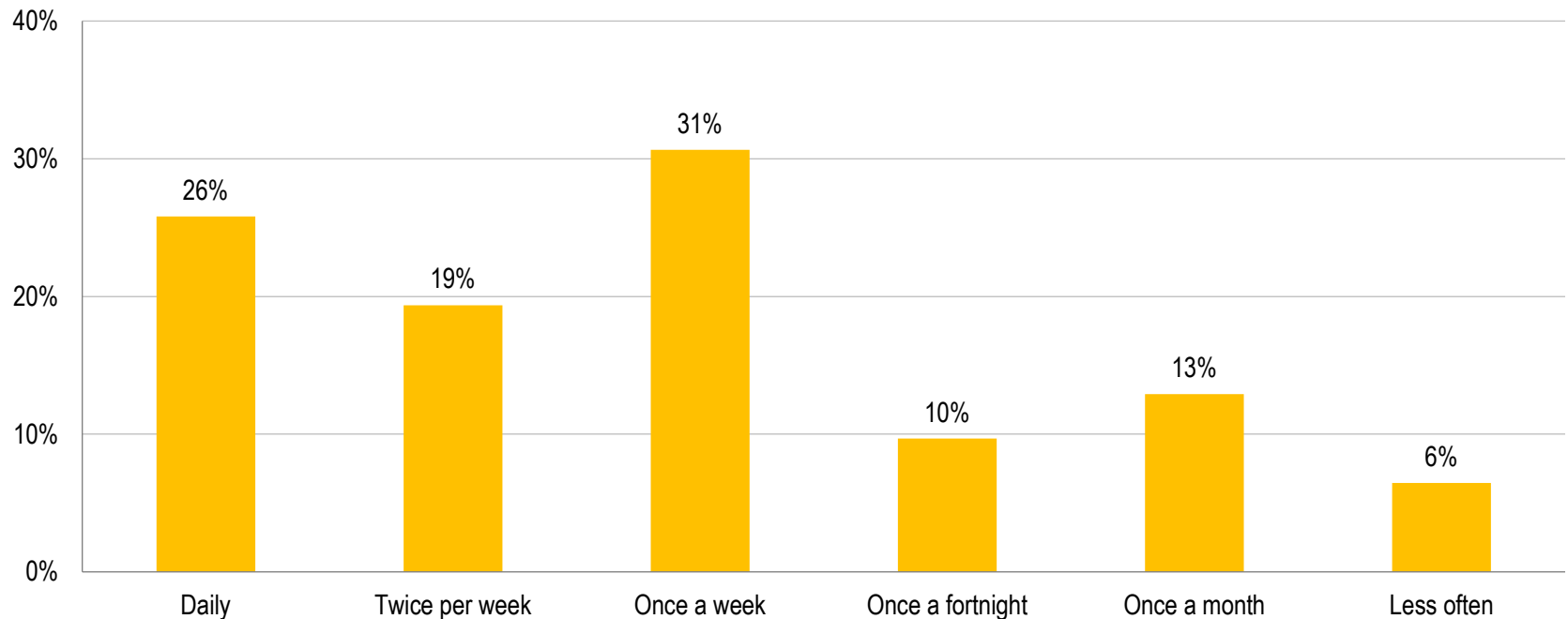
The majority of survey respondents report that their customers include those living or work nearby plus those who are shopping.

Secondary reasons for being in Kirkbymoorside include eating / drinking, the market and commuting / passing through.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.4 How often do your customers typically visit you?



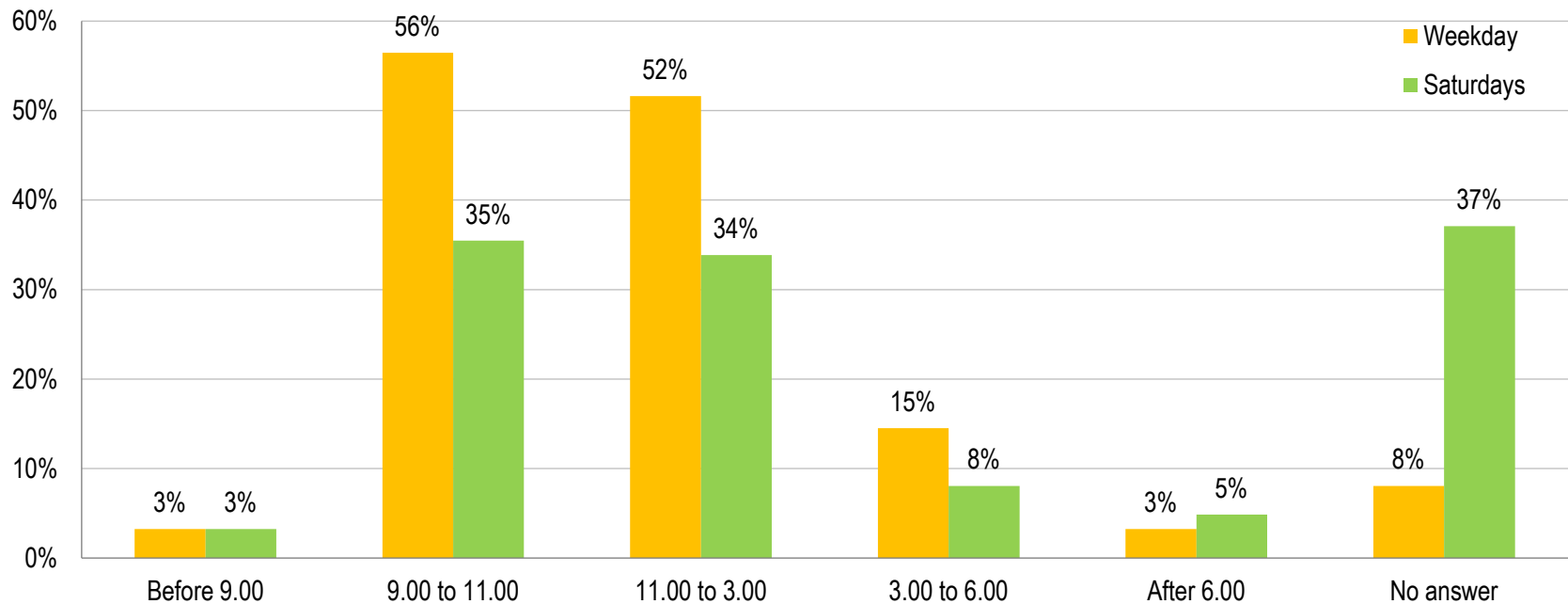
Businesses across the town centre report a frequent customer visit pattern, with three quarters of respondents reporting their customers visit at least once a week.

A significant minority of businesses also say their customers visit fortnightly or less frequently.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.5 What are your busiest times of day on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays??

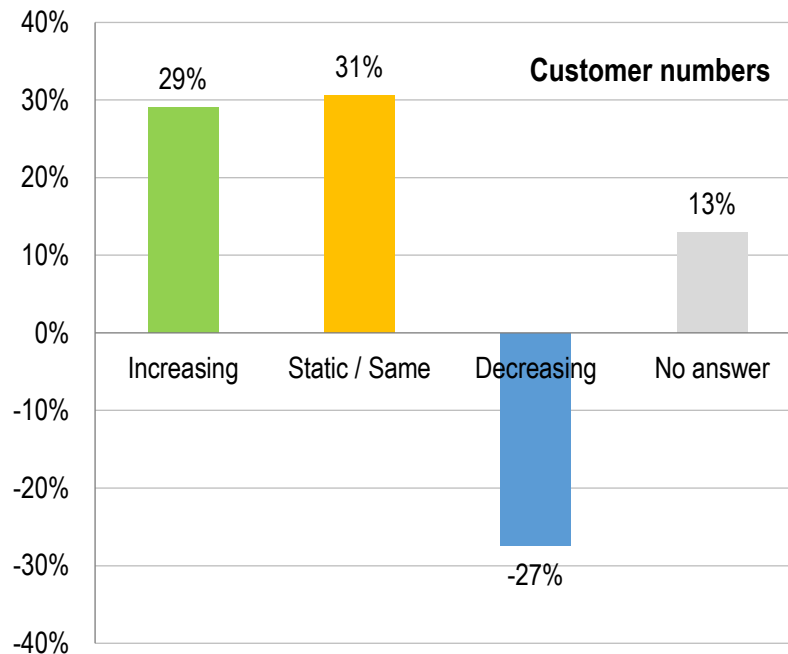


Most businesses report that early mornings on both weekdays and Saturdays are their busiest times. The town centre would appear to be quiet after 15.00. Less than 20% of businesses say they open on Sunday.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

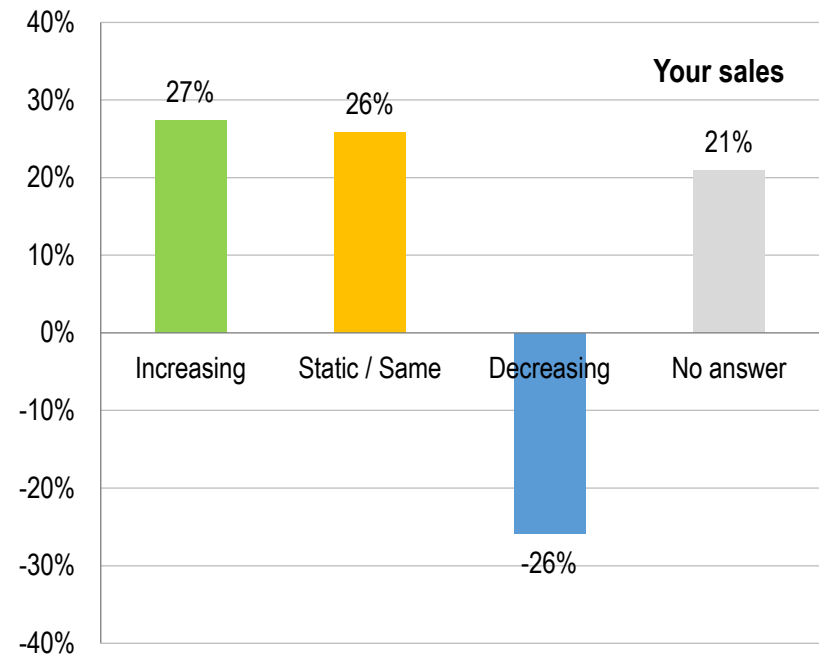
4.6 How are your customer numbers compared to last year?



It's a mixed bag of performance for customer numbers, with similar numbers reporting they are up, level or down year on year.

This is actually a relatively positive result when compared to other projects we have completed recently.

4.7 And how about your sales compared to last year?

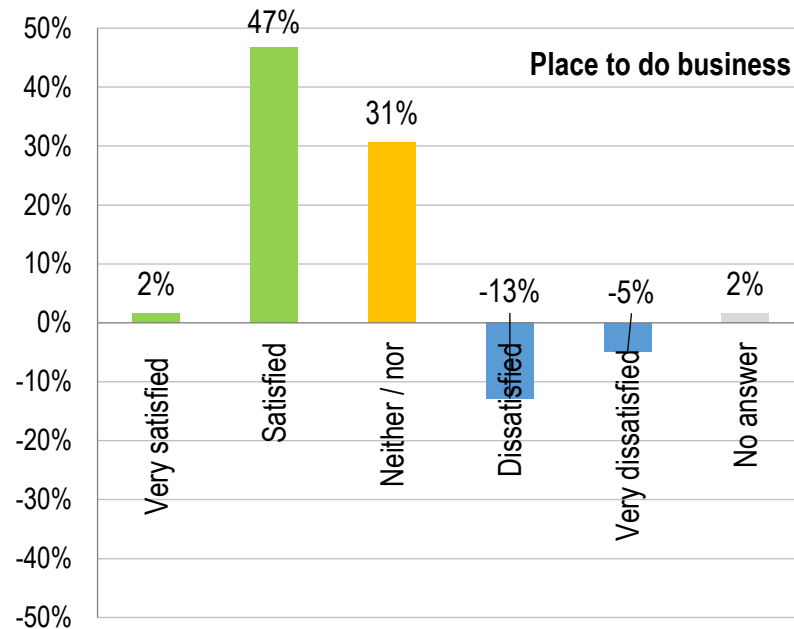


Businesses report similar results in regards sales, with broadly similar numbers reporting sales as being up, static or down year on year.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

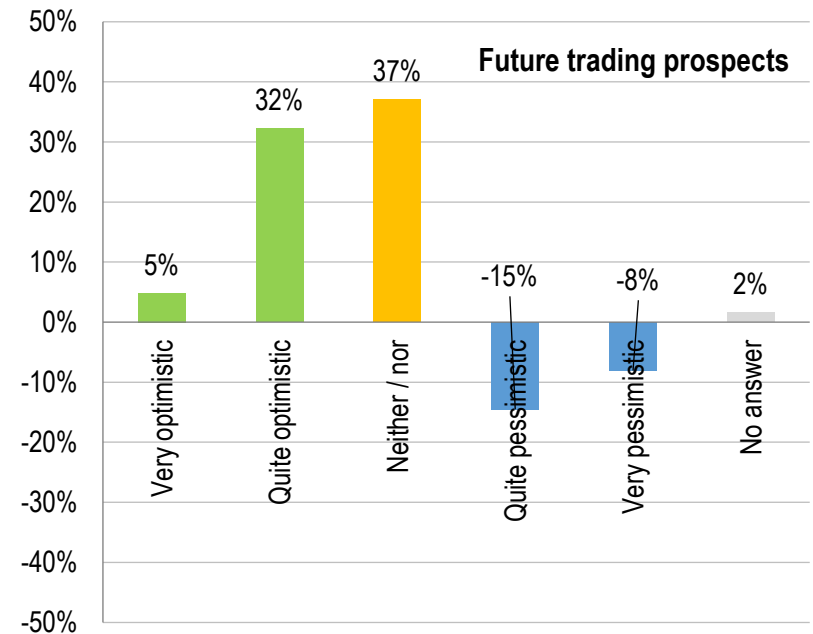
4.8 How satisfied are you with the performance of Kirkbymoorside as a place to do business?



Encouragingly, half of businesses are pleased with the performance of Kirkbymoorside as a place to do business, with a further third sitting on the fence.

Less than 20% are dissatisfied.

4.9 How positive are you about future trading prospects in Kirkbymoorside?

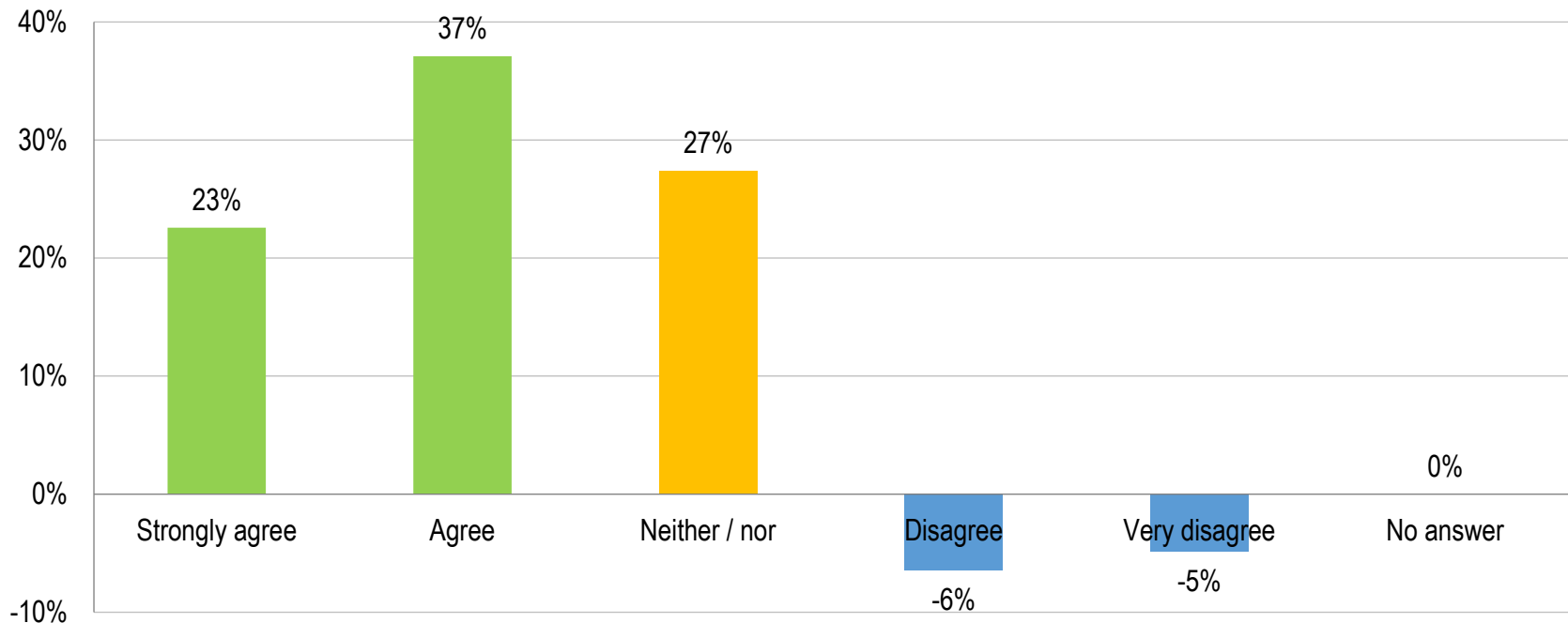


Respondents in the survey are reasonably optimistic about the future trading prospects in Kirkbymoorside, with over a third optimistic and a third being ambivalent. Less than a quarter of businesses are pessimistic.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.10 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? ... 'Tourism is a major untapped opportunity for Kirkbymoorside'

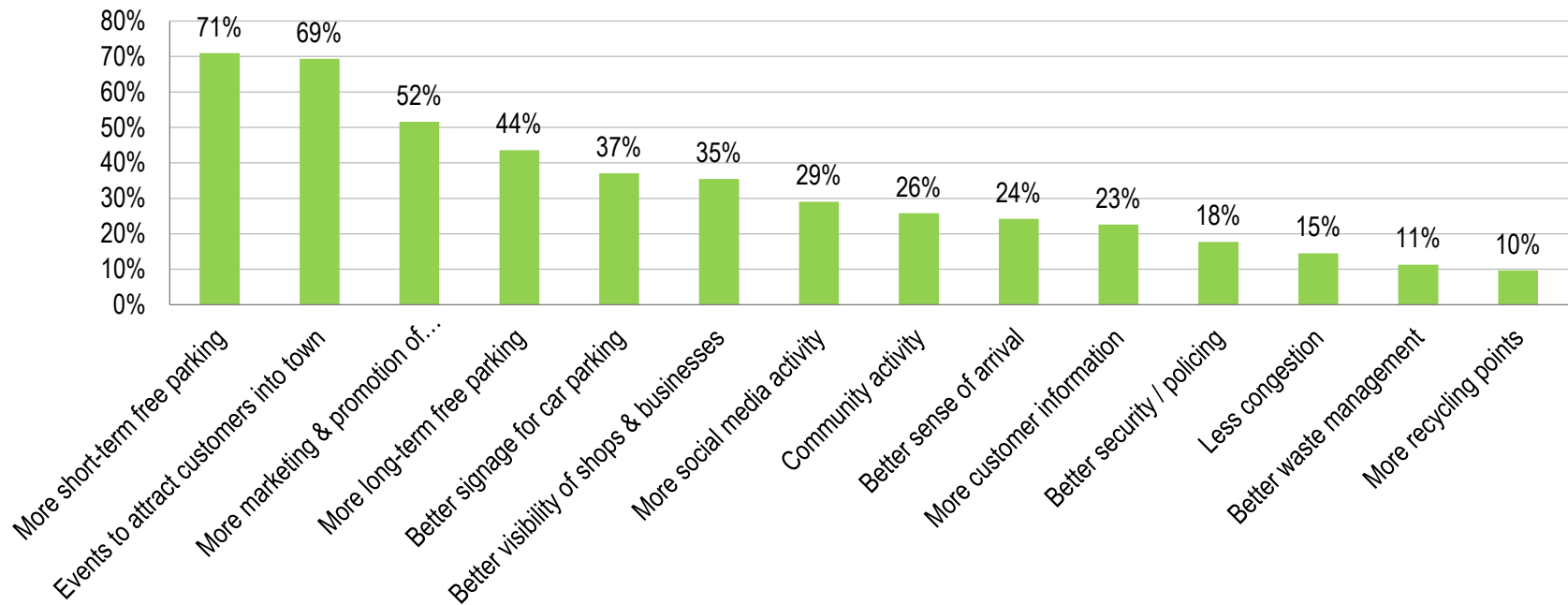


There is significant consensus that tourists represent a major untapped trading opportunity for Kirkbymoorside. Whilst a quarter of respondents no view, the majority agree with the statement. Few businesses disagree.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.11 Please identify which of the following are the highest customer experience improvements you would like to see in Kirkbymoorside?



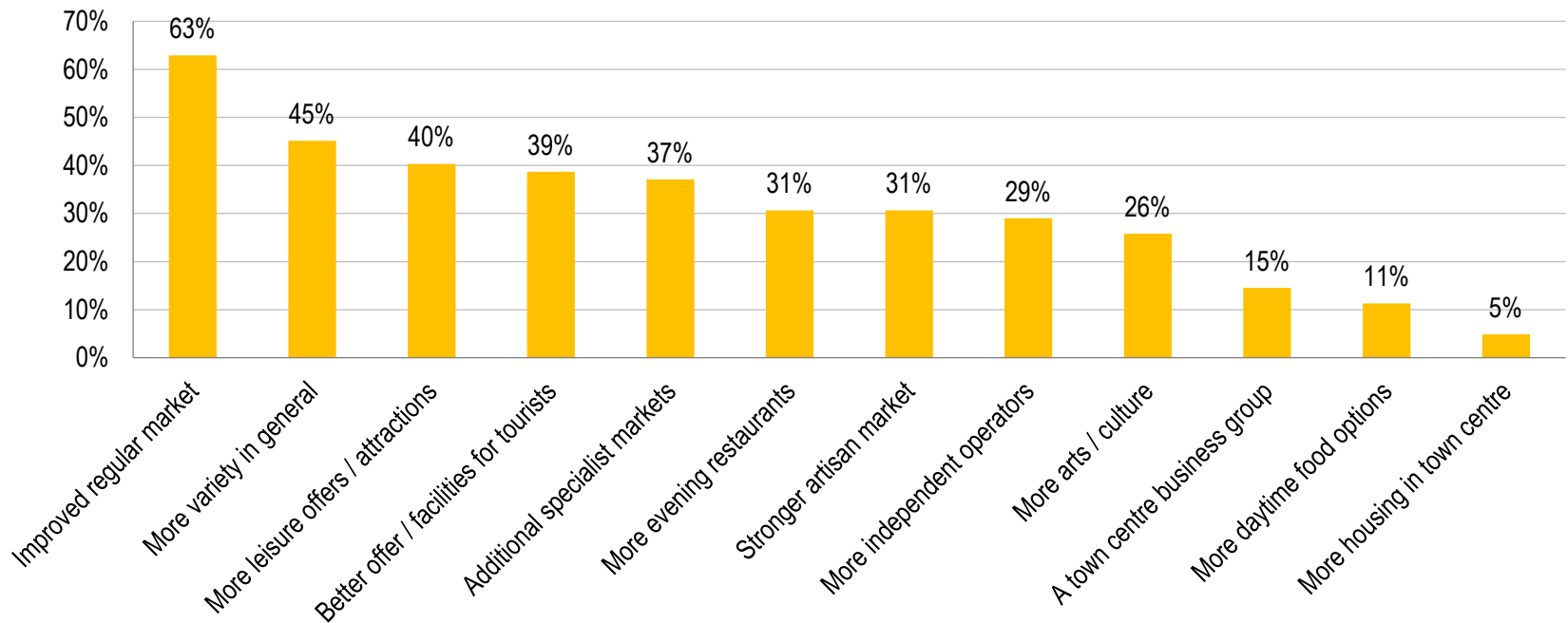
Businesses tell us there are lots of opportunities to improve the customer experience, particularly better parking and better marketing & promotion. Broadly, the improvement aspirations can be summarised under the following headings:

- Better experience - more and better parking (short term and long term), better visibility of shops, and more community activity.
- Better signage and information - more signage for parking, more customer information and better sense of arrival.
- Better marketing and promotion - more events, marketing & more promotion of offer and more social media activity.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.12 Generally, for the long term, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside offer improve?



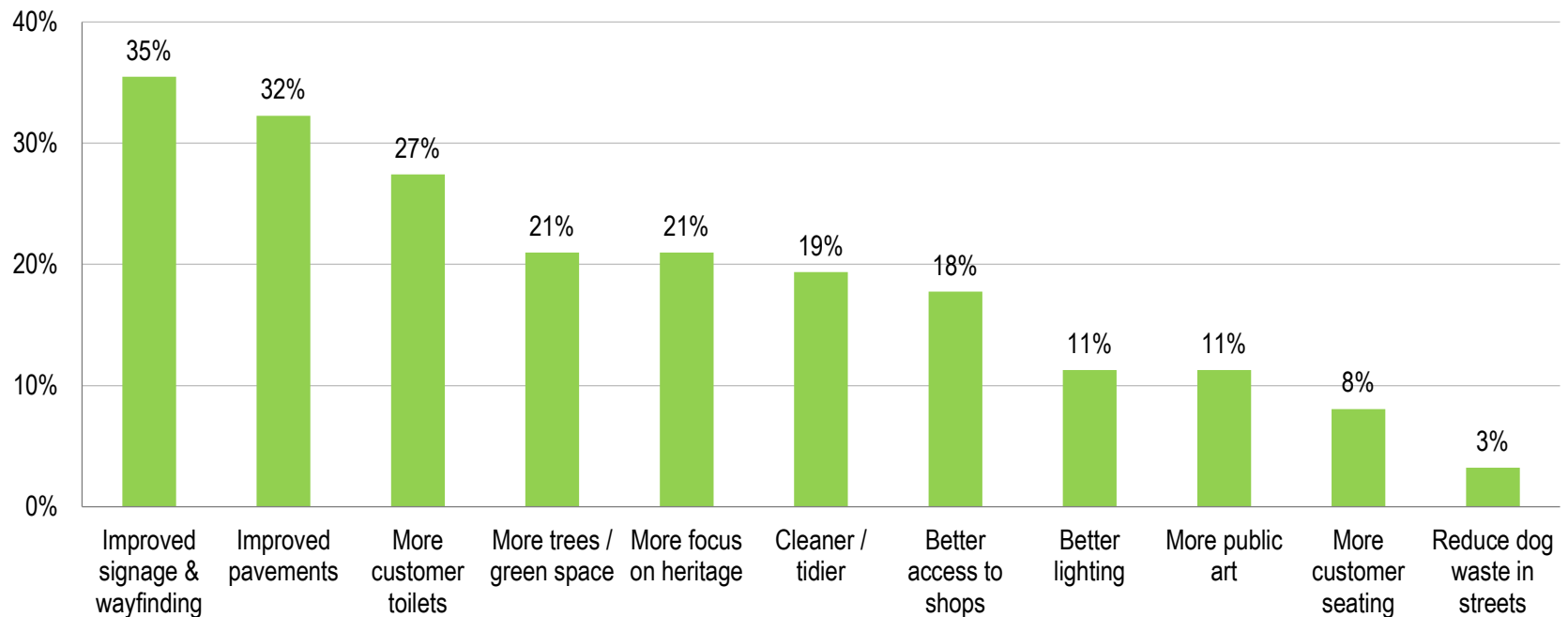
There is widespread consensus from respondents that Kirkbymoorside needs an improved regular market, stronger artisan market, as well as visiting specialist markets.

Respondents would also like to see more variety, more for tourists, more leisure offers / attractions, more evening & daytime F&B, more arts / culture and a town centre business group.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.13 Thinking specifically about the public realm, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside improved?

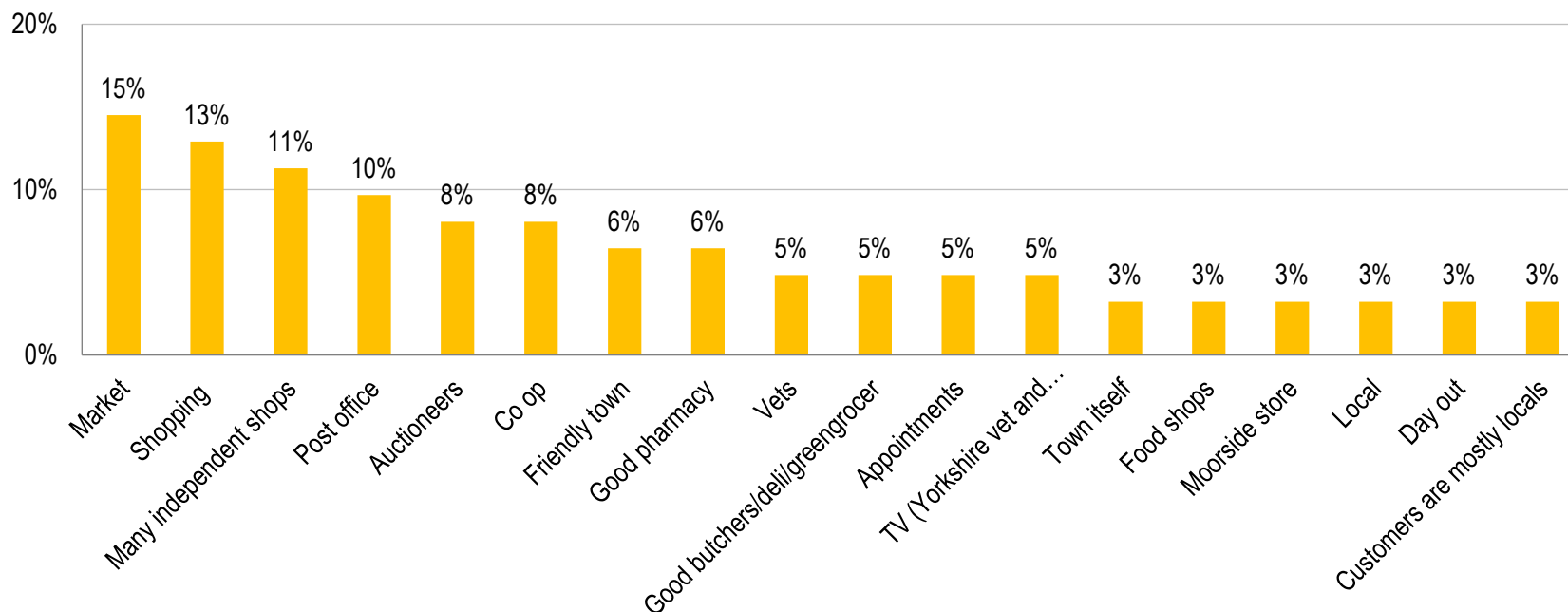


In regards the public realm, respondents want particularly want to see improved signage, better pavements and more toilets. They'd also like to see more trees / green space, more focus on heritage , cleaner / tidier and better access to shops. Finally better lighting, more public art and more public seating are also important improvements wanted to the public realm.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.14 What would you say are the main reasons / attractions / businesses that bring customers into Kirkbymoorside?

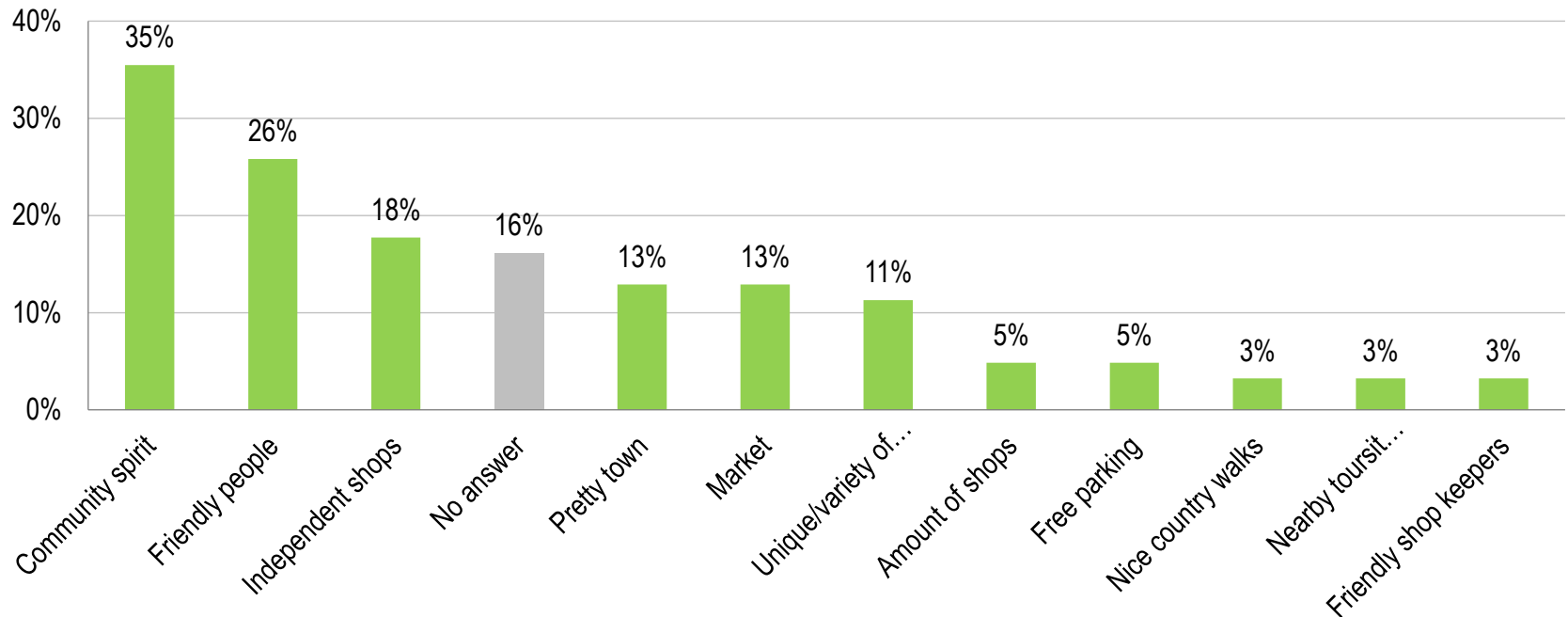


The good news is there are many different reasons / attractions that draw people to Kirkbymoorside. These are dominated particularly by key components of the offer, especially the market and independent shops in general, but also specific shops such as the post office, pharmacy and the convenience store offer. The services offer including the auctioneers and the vets are recognised as important draws, as are general factors such as the friendliness of the town itself.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.15 What would you say are the three main strengths of Kirkbymoorside?

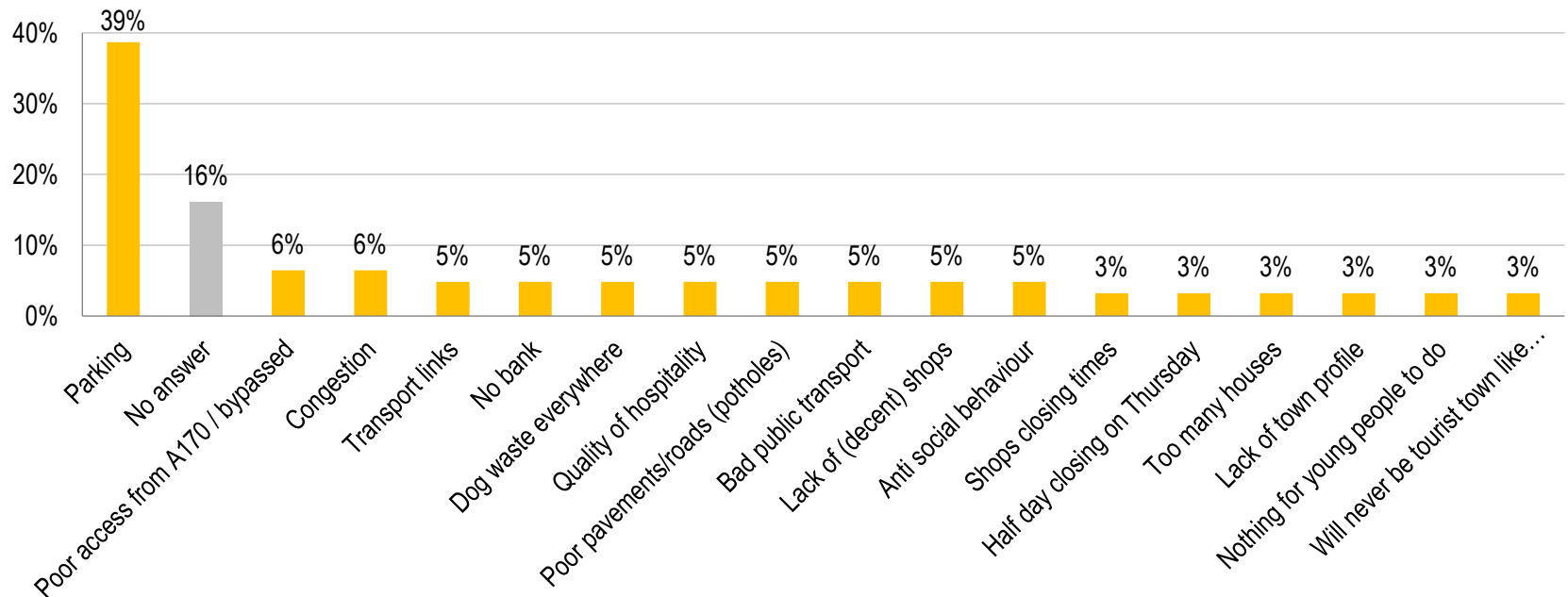


In regards key strengths of the offer, respondents told us they include the friendly people / community spirit, mix of independent shops, market and aesthetics of the town.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.16 What would you say are the three main weaknesses of Kirkbymoorside?

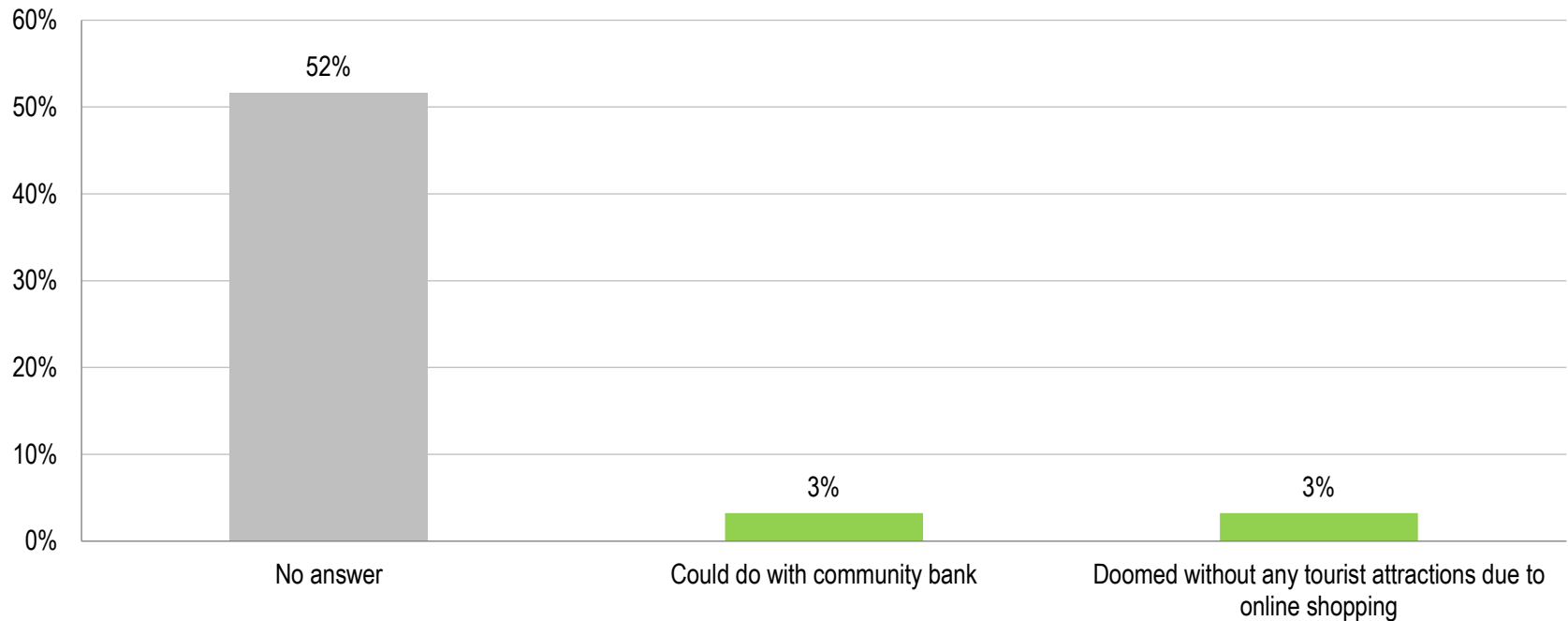


Kirkbymoorside's weaknesses according to businesses are demonstrably dominated by one main issue – parking. Other weaknesses relate to access, limited public transport, poor customer visit environment, limited choice and anti-social behaviour.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.17 And finally, are there any other comments about Kirkbymoorside you would like to add or make?



Few respondents provided an answer to the general comments question (over 50% didn't). Of those that did, the only two comments that received more than one response were the 'need for a community bank' and also the 'need for more appeal / attractions for tourists'.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

4.0 Survey of Businesses

4.18 Summary

- This survey of businesses has achieved a very good response from businesses in Kirkbymoorside, with 62 businesses taking part out of circa 68 distributed.
- Respondents cover a range of retail, service and food-based categories.
- Main reasons for visiting are dominated by live and work nearby, plus shopping, market, eating / drinking and passing through.
- Businesses across the town centre report a frequent visit by consumers.
- Most businesses report early morning weekday and Saturdays are busiest.
- It's a mixed picture in terms of customer numbers and sales, with a third up, a third static and a quarter down.
- Half of businesses report a broadly 'satisfied' rating for business performance (59%), with 18% dissatisfied.
- Businesses are mostly optimistic or unsure about the future prospects for Kirkbymoorside (72%). 23% are pessimistic.
- Most agree that tourism is an untapped many opportunity (60%). Only 11% disagree.
- Businesses tell us there are lots of opportunities to improve customer experience, with parking, events, better marketing & promotion and signage dominating the list.
- Businesses tell us there are lots of opportunities to improve the mix of the offer, including improved existing market plus additional specialist markets plus artisan markets, more variety, more leisure and better facilities for tourists.
- In regards the public realm, signage & wayfinding, improved pavements and more toilets dominate the list.
- Businesses say there are lots and lots of different reasons or attractions that pull consumers to Kirkbymoorside.
- Main strengths are the community spirit, friendly people and independent businesses. Main weakness is parking.
- Overall, we would summarise that businesses clearly know Kirkbymoorside and have a good understanding of the priority improvements needed.

Stakeholder Engagement

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

5.0 Survey of Stakeholders

5.1 Introduction

A bespoke questionnaire was developed for the project to survey stakeholders, based on previous tried and tested questionnaires we have developed for similar projects as well as the questions used in the resident and business surveys. This is attached as Appendix II.

A list of circa 40 contacts to survey / engage was provided by the Council project team and these were all sent surveys and then followed up on four separate occasions.

11 stakeholders provided their views, either through a completed survey and / or a 121 discussion.

These represent a variety of stakeholder types within Kirkbymoorside, including:

- North Yorkshire Council
- Town Council
- Community groups
- B&B operators
- Employers / businesses
- Churches.

5.2 Strengths & Weaknesses

Stakeholders had a wide variety of views in regards the **strengths** of the town centre, with 14 separate strengths being highlighted in total.

The 'community spirit' dominates the list with seven mentions, followed by the 'beautiful countryside / access to Moors' with five mentions.

The 'range and variety of independent shops' were highlighted by four respondents, then 'clusters of industrial businesses' as mentioned by three.

The only other response to be mentioned by two or more stakeholders were historic market town / streetscape; as well as 'range of active groups'.

In regards key **weaknesses**, there were many more (26) mentioned, albeit most of them being single responses. These included various comments about parking, the limited shop / market offer, resistance to change and dominant competition (nearby bigger tourist towns, supermarkets and online).

The following weaknesses were mentioned by two stakeholders:

- Limited short-term parking
- Too many vacancies
- Transport infrastructure
- Lack of co-ordination between stakeholders.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

5.0 Survey of Stakeholders

5.3 Main attractions/reasons for customers to be in Kirkbymoorside

Stakeholders provided a wide range of reasons (17) for customers to be in the town, with the dominant responses including 'local independent shops' with six responses, 'regular market' with four, 'fabulous countryside' (three) and churches (two).

The remaining single answer responses were mainly in regards specific destinations, attractions and facilities.

Clearly Kirkbymoorside attracts consumers for lots of reasons!

5.4 Improvements wanted to customer experience

Most of the options provided on the survey were highlighted by many respondents as areas to improve in regards the customer experience. This suggest there are lots of opportunities to improve the customer experience according to stakeholders!

The dominant responses were 'more marketing and promotion of centre' and 'better sense of arrival', both with eight responses.

This was followed by 'events to draw customers in' and more short-term parking' and 'more long-term parking', all with seven responses.

'Better visibility of shops' was next with six responses, followed by 'more community activity' with five and then 'more customer information' and 'more social media activity' both with four. The only other response to generate more than one vote was 'better signage for car parking' with three votes.

5.5 Improvements wanted to Kirkbymoorside offer

Stakeholders were asked how they'd like to see the town centre offer improved over the long term.

The dominant responses included 'more leisure offers / attractions' with seven votes, followed by 'more evening restaurants' with six.

All of the following areas were mentioned by five respondents, namely 'more independent operators', 'more variety in general', 'improved regular market', 'improved artisan market', 'town centre business group', 'better offer for tourists' and 'more arts / culture'.

And 'more daytime food options' was highlighted by three respondents.

5.6 Improvements wanted to Kirkbymoorside public realm

This area generated less support from stakeholders than improving the customer experience and or the offer overall.

The responses were dominated by 'more focus on heritage' with seven responses, followed by 'improved signage and wayfinding' with six.

'More trees and greening', along with 'cleaner / tidier' both scored three, whilst the following improvements were all mentioned twice, namely 'better lighting', 'improved pavements', 'better access to shops', 'more customer toilets' and 'more customer seating'.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

5.0 Survey of Stakeholders

5.7 Is tourism an untapped opportunity for Kirkbymoorside?

The above question was asked of all respondents, and every stakeholder who provided an answer agreed it is (five strongly agreed and four just agreed).

5.8 Current performance and future trading prospects

There was no consensus as to whether Kirkbymoorside is currently performing well as a good place to do business (three said yes, three said no and two didn't know!)

In regards how positive respondents are about the future trading prospects for Kirkbymoorside, this question also achieved a mixed response, with four respondents saying they didn't know, and two saying they are optimistic and two saying they are pessimistic.

5.8 Growth aspirations for Kirkbymoorside

Respondents were asked what kind of a place did they want Kirkbymoorside to be in the future. A variety of specific comments were made, including those shown in the speech balloons below and opposite.

Future aspirations for Kirkbymoorside

"On the map!"

"Thriving night time economy"

"Local money spent locally!"

"Less vacancies / shops filled"

"Ample free 30 min parking spaces"

"Active CIC"

"Needs a plan as well as an identity"

"New sports centre and or modern gym for young and old"

"More spend from residents plus more spend from tourists"

"Improved community facilities, including refurbished Memorial Hall"

"Thriving market town with much better market"

"Well supported community"

"Celebrates its history"

Resident Information and Wider Policy Context

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

6.0 Resident Information and Wider Context

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report provides two areas of input into the Kirkbymoorside feasibility study and action plan.

The first aspect is to summarise the available information about the established Kirkbymoorside and wider area residents / workers, as are all potential users / visitors to Kirkbymoorside Town Centre, either as regulars or occasional users.

This information has been sourced from available information provided by the Council, existing reports and other recognised providers of information including ONS and NOMIS.

The information about residents is set out overleaf. This includes current information on population and indicators of lifestyle and demographics.

The second part of the section then provides more background and wider context information about Kirkbymoorside and includes summary information from Council strategies and policies, in particular the Council's Economic Growth Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and the Ryedale Plan (Local Plan Strategy).



Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

6.0 Resident Information and Wider Context

6.2 Summary Resident Information

The following information has been drawn from the NYC Town Profile for Kirkbymoorside, Local Insight Summary Report 2024, and from the current NOMIS report (which now covers the Kirkbymoorside and Dales Ward area).

There are circa 3,110 residents in the town area. This increases to 6,348 for the Kirkbymoorside and Dales Ward area. The Ryedale population is circa 51,000.

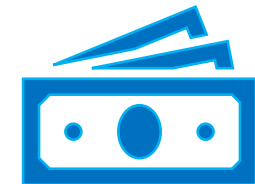
Kirkbymoorside has a higher proportion of over 65's than average, compared to the region and UK averages.

Its is below average for ages up to 50 and above average for ages 50 and over, this does include being above average for the 50-65 age range.

The proportion described as economically active, is broadly in line with region and UK average. That said, the proportion of those retired is well above the region and UK.

The area has low levels of indicators of deprivation:

- The area benefits from a mixed employment base. Key sectors, Accommodation, Food service & Transport manufacture.
- Low unemployment 1.5%, below UK.
- More / above average managers, directors and senior officials.
- More / above average skilled trades occupations.
- Circa a third of employment is working from home, a little above region and UK.
- Car / van is dominant method of travel to work, in line with region and UK.
- Above average home ownership, 'outright', low social renting, high private renting.
- Circa 90% have access to a car, above region and UK averages.



Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

6.0 Resident Information and Wider Context

6.3 NYC Economic Growth Strategy 2024-2029

NYC Economic Growth Strategy 2024-2029

A selection of relevant points extracted from the 72-page document:

This report sets out the vision and growth plans for the Council. We have extracted key points to help direct the Kirkbymoorside action plan.

The Vision is stated as: 'Our vision is to be an innovative, carbon negative economy driven by our productive and entrepreneurial business base and the places & communities that make North Yorkshire distinctive'. Key strengths include, our outstanding places spanning urban, rural, and coastal locations, where a breadth of cultural and heritage assets combine with thriving market towns in the third largest local authority in England.

The strategy sets out 3 'Pillars' to underpin its actions and goals as follows:

Pillar 1: Enterprise: is the central pillar of this strategy, focused on supporting the growth of businesses in North Yorkshire building on our existing and emerging sectoral strengths, and increasing innovation and productivity throughout the economy.

Pillar 2: Infrastructure: equipping our town centres and places to thrive in the 21st century and realising the vast potential that our strategic development sites offer with investment in transport, housing, digital and energy infrastructure to enable sustainable growth.

Pillar 3: People: ensuring people have the skills they need to develop their careers and meet the needs of business, enabling people in all of our communities are able to participate in the economy and benefit from its success.

Market towns are identified as being important for many reasons: The 'jewels in our crown', our market towns are integral to our economic success. Each different in character, they offer vibrant culture and amenities, but must continue to adapt to meet the needs of people and business and the move to a low carbon economy. Market towns will benefit strongly from business growth and support. They will also benefit from anchor organisations. Market towns will see specific investment plans developed where they don't exist already, building on the good practice of places such as Northallerton, Selby and Whitby. These will be unique to each town, to reflect their specific needs and opportunities and ensure they remain thriving places to live, visit and do business in the 21st century.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

6.0 Resident Information and Wider Context

6.4 The Ryedale Plan (Local Plan Strategy)

The Ryedale Plan (Local Plan Strategy)

The Ryedale Plan report sets out the overarching guide for ongoing development during the Local Plan period. Whilst it is a formal planning document it does provide aspirations for places in the borough. We have extracted key points that are relevant to Kirkbymoorside. A key 'Economy' message, sets out a clear need to diversify the District's economic base in order to reduce reliance on traditional sectors and to provide resilience to further restructuring or decline. The plan identifies 3 aims:

A selection of relevant points extracted from the extensive document

Aim 1: To create opportunities to retain and create jobs, skills and prosperity and to develop a diverse and resilient economy that supports an ability to live and work in Ryedale.

Aim 2: To work toward rebalancing the age structure of the District; protect and enhance the safety and well-being of local communities; improve choices for local people and meet their needs for new homes, jobs, shops and services.

Aim 3: To protect and enhance the environment, Ryedale's unique character and special qualities associated with its high quality landscapes, rich historic and cultural heritage and a wealth of biodiversity; utilising natural assets and resources for renewable / low carbon energy generation; minimising the risk of flooding and increasing resilience to climate change.

Furthermore, enhance the role of the Market Towns as accessible, attractive and vibrant service centres, offering a range of homes, jobs, shops, entertainment, leisure and recreational facilities within a high quality public realm. The historic character of each of the three northern Market Towns is an important feature of each of them and the ability to assimilate new development at the towns in a way which does not undermine their historic character or surrounding historic landscapes will be a key consideration in the selection of new development sites at these towns. Aims for Kirkbymoorside include:

- A vibrant, working Transition Market Town, Maintaining and encouraging activity in the Market Place, including the Wednesday Market. Plus retaining the compact and accessible Market town feel.
- Reinforcing a sense of place, improving the appearance and approach to the Town along the A170. Protect the integrity, character and quality of the Town Centre Conservation Area.
- Support tourism initiatives that work in 'harmony' with the working town ethos of the town and which support the town's role as a gateway to the North York Moors.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

6.0 Resident Information and Wider Context

6.5 NYC Climate Change Strategy and North Yorkshire Culture Strategy

NYC Climate Change Strategy	<p>This report sets out the route map for Council to achieving its climate change goals and aspirations. We have not sought to summarise the full document, but to identify and recognise how the Kirkbymoorside action plan can help to deliver the goals and aspirations.</p> <p>Three elements of the route map are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions- Preparing for the climate changing- Supporting nature to thrive. <p>The Council will work with partners to develop climate change awareness and actions approach to enable individuals, organisations and businesses to make climate responsible choices. Enable and support people to choose multi person travel options, such as public transport, community-based transport, demand responsive travel, car share & car clubs.</p>
North Yorkshire Cultural Strategy – November 2024	<p>Kirkbymoorside is on the cultural strategy map (it is sometimes missed from other policy documents). Culture and associated activity can be used to create places where people want, and are able to live, work, visit, learn and engage. Also, to ensure that places, spaces and activities are inclusive and accessible. Finally, to identify, support and promote places, spaces, people and activities that can contribute to the vision.</p>
Miscellaneous	<p>The emerging North Yorkshire DMP (Destination Management Plan) identifies the region attracts circa 35 million visitors. Future actions will minimise the negative environmental and social impacts of tourism, whilst enhancing the economic and cultural benefits for visitors, businesses, and local people.</p> <p>The NYC Kirkbymoorside Town Profile identifies an opportunity to build on the town's existing heritage and current TV exposure, improve the High Street / Market Place offer, and support existing and new employers. Also, embrace high tech businesses, develop a USP for town, as business / community representatives expressed concern about appearance of town, empty shops and wish to explore what could be done.</p>

Trends & Benchmark Centres Review

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

7.0 Trends and Benchmark Centres Review

7.1 Introduction

A summary of recent trends has been compiled to provide an overview of the current, dominant trends affecting the wider 'retail' sector and centres, be they local, town and city. This is based on extensive reviews of published research, reports, articles and insight from industry leaders and our own project experience. Note the term 'retail' is used as a short description for the complete range of typical town centre customer facing businesses, including shops, cafes, leisure, service providers and hospitality businesses.

The monitoring and reporting of trends is an established research workstream, one that is included in all of our 'place' projects, be it local, town or city centres, or even markets and non-traditional centres. For this project we have revisited our existing information sources and included the more recent post Covid information.

This broad research approach has enabled us to collate the views of a wide audience from industry leading bodies such as the ATCM, Revo and Institute of Place Management; to research and insight specialists including Deloitte, PwC, Dunnhumby and McKinsey; to retail property and planning specialists, government bodies and other industry specialists.

The retail landscape has and continues to evolve and change – it remains in a state of flux. A clear understanding of what is, has and continues to drive change will help underpin a future successful town / city centre strategy. Covid has accelerated many of the trends that were already evident.

Going forward the ability for places to adapt and react quickly and readily to these changes will be one of the keys to future success. Humans are social animals. Towns and cities will continue in the future to play an essential role in encouraging consumers to meet, eat, shop and play.

The Covid Pandemic has accelerated many of these established trends and factors. Those that are especially appropriate or have been magnified in their importance have also been highlighted.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

7.0 Trends and Benchmark Centres Review

7.2 Changes to Consumer Shopping & Visit Patterns

Consumer behaviour continues to change and in the wake of technological advancements it is changing at a rapid pace. Consumers are demanding ever increasing 'convenience' with shopping needing to be an 'easy' experience and "when it suits me". With the advent of the 'connected consumer', consumers want and expect to be able to buy anytime and anywhere.

Meanwhile discounters like Aldi and Lidl have reminded us of the benefits of 'shopping around' and not just for convenience goods, but in a general search for 'value'. Big food stores have also, in many ways become 'too big to shop' and take up too much time. Food operators have moved away from opening megastores but preferring the right size store for the right sized market.

Whilst a great many businesses were negatively affected by the Covid Pandemic, those that adapted and responded, continued to provide high levels of service thrived and, in some cases, grew, prospered and expanded.

This trend has also extended into other categories with retail giants such as IKEA and Decathlon opening small format stores responding to the consumer need for ease and convenience but also for smaller, specialised curated offers, and taking their offer to the consumer.

'Ease of shopping' extends to the full range of facilities in town / city centres, including ease of access, information provision, car parking and adjacencies / connectivity. Customers are increasingly able to choose to go to a location, for many other reasons than the list of retail names present and the size of the stores they trade from. The boundaries between shopping and leisure are becoming ever more blurred, with opportunities to combine leisure, eating and drinking and to 'make a day of it' adding to the appeal of destinations.

Despite the ability of online to satisfy retail requirements quickly, consumers are increasingly looking for meaningful 'experiences' and personalisation; human interaction also remains an important factor.

Consumers, even though overloaded with technology, are still visiting shops. Understanding your customer base; anticipating what customers want and providing it to them is at the heart of any retail, town or city centre proposition. With consumer patterns for work, live and socialising constantly evolving, understanding and remembering the reasons to use or visit a place is even more important in the post Covid era.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

7.0 Trends and Benchmark Centres Review

7.3 Retailer Trends

The Covid Pandemic and ongoing economic challenge have combined to fundamentally shake the pillars of retail dynamics, especially in large town and city centres. The demise of many large established long term retail brands has shown how important it is to be able to adapt and evolve. The same can be expected for the places that businesses operate in.

It seems likely that retailers, service and food & beverage operators will be much more flexible when choosing to open in new markets, be they re-occupied units, re-purposed units, subdivided units and even the occasional new unit!

There are also new players on the scene as even pure play (on-line only) operators and increasing numbers of consumer brands are seeing the benefit and potential to their brand of physical stores. Retailers are increasingly exploring diversity in both store formats and retail channels as well as new product categories and 'mix' of categories. Large format store brands are opening smaller stores and small shop brands are increasing their store sizes.

What is the new multichannel? It is best described as an emerging mix of all formats; town / city centre, online, mobile, home delivery, click and collect and out of town. The biggest and most successful retailers offer the full set and, in some instances, different product categories are better suited to different channels. It is far more than simply 'clicks or bricks'.

'Retailers' as a group now includes many other types of offer, such as F&B which has seen considerable growth, with F&B now an integral part of any retail offer. F&B and leisure will increasingly become a very important role in the appeal of town centres, enhancing the visit experience 'beyond retail'. This leisure role also provides another aspect of the 'multi-functional town / city centre' and thereby an additional reason to visit, while extending dwell time and encouraging social interaction.

Service providers, particularly beauty and personal grooming are also expanding in town and city centres. Whilst the big box branded leisure market is at maturity and potentially saturation, small boutique cinemas and gyms are still being opened.

One of the strongest growing sectors is the reuse and repair sector, with consumers demonstrating a keenness to stretch the extra mile out of a product, thus building on personal sustainability and mitigating the 'throw away' or disposable culture.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

7.0 Trends and Benchmark Centres Review

7.4 Changes to Shopping Patterns

Over the last five years, The Retail Group has been helping many independent businesses adapt their trading model, to survive and thrive. We have helped over 500 business directly through a combination of 1-2-1 support (in person or virtual) as well as virtual group workshops. We have also surveyed over 4,000 town centre businesses (of all shapes, sizes and categories) probing specifically how shopping patterns have changed.

The contributions and feedback we have received have been incredibly insightful and rewarding in regards how consumers now shop in local centres and market towns. This includes:

- Shoppers are typically visiting local centres in smaller groups / party sizes.
- More people are walking and cycling to centres, although travel by car still dominate mode of travel.
- The frequency of visit and usage of local centres has improved, but consumers are typically visiting for shorter durations.
- Spend has gone up as a result, i.e. average basket size has improved.
- There is much more demand for e-commerce and cashless payment mechanisms.
- Businesses that have clearly reacted and adapted to these trends have benefitted as a result.
- More consumers are shopping locally, combining it with more online shopping, demand for choice locally is increasing.
- Service providers in local centres, as well as those providing more experience are seeing growth and benefits.
- There is significant consumer goodwill for independent shops. Businesses that 'go the extra mile' in terms of customer service have also typically been the more successful in regards generating revenue.
- Businesses that offer easy and more convenient purchasing options have also seen strongest trading performance, i.e. those businesses that offer click and collect / pre-ordering of products, online / omni channel purchase options and local delivery have retained customer loyalty and spend.
- Businesses in local centres can benefit from working together collaboratively, especially in regards combined promotions, events and delivery services.
- Pro-active marketing and promotion helps to drive footfall (both destination visits as well as impulse spend). This includes additional services such as late night or VIP opening, meet the supplier events, new product launches, local centre celebrations, tie-ups with schools or NHS providers and so on.
- Centres with clear identities, well promoted reasons to visit and who provide safe and clean visit experiences are typically performing better than those that don't!

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

7.0 Trends and Benchmark Centres Review

7.5 What do the Trends Mean for Kirkbymoorside?

Consumers on the whole like to shop, they like to 'go shopping' but increasingly they like to combine it with F&B, leisure or service use.

The focus going forward is less on 'retail', with local, town and city centres becoming multi-functional with a more diverse offer. The right type of catering, food and beverage, service and associated leisure offers is key to healthy town / city centres. Similarly, the other reasons to be in centres, transport, health, work, hidden workers, education, well-being and so on should built on / capitalised on. Whilst in many cases these are already in situ, they are often overlooked in the focus on rampant consumerism. Whereas now the focus is on creating a 'complete' offer with a distinctive individual place identity. That said, the 'complete' offer will be different according to the needs of the local customer and the historic role of the centre.

Successful centres will be those with multiple purposes and multiple reasons for use and drivers of 'footfall'. 'Click and Collect' potentially has an important role to play in driving footfall into town and city centres. Driving this footfall into both stores and centres has a positive effect on turnover not just for the individual store but surrounding operators and the centre itself.

Centre 'content' will continue to change and evolve, with 'content' much more than just shops and businesses - environment, markets, events, leisure, facilities, heritage assets, local culture, residential and other factors are increasingly contributing to the appeal of the location, making it a desirable place to visit and use on a regular basis. Centres that offer additional and memorable reasons to use them will succeed the most. As will those that are well integrated with local attractions / historic assets and vice versa.

This links to the need for centres to have real sense of 'place' that connects with the consumer, providing a point of difference and a connection to the local community. Centres in need of 'TLC' and those not delivering the basics such as clean, safe and pleasant environment will lose out to spend online and to out of town retail facilities, or other improving competing places.

Kirkbymoorside has the potential to benefit significantly from the above consumer behaviour and place trends.

Study Conclusions

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

8.0 Study Conclusions

Introduction

The following emerging conclusions are drawn from the findings of the bespoke research workstreams undertaken as part of the study, and together they form the foundations on which the recommended future Kirkbymoorside Action Plan for Growth is developed.

8.1 Kirkbymoorside has lots of reasons to visit it

Kirkbymoorside is blessed with many strong and long term established independent businesses trading within the core town centre area, which combine to create its unique sense of place and charm. The Memorial Hall, Community Library and Moorside Room in the core town centre all add to this appeal.

Kirkbymoorside further benefits from lots of established attractions, service businesses (two of which have strong media profiles), leisure attractions and accommodation-based businesses and light industrial manufacturers trading in / near it.

The town is also located on the edge of the stunning and famous North Yorkshire Moors.

All of which combine to create the multitude of reasons why customers already travel to or near Kirkbymoorside.

8.2 Kirkbymoorside is a very friendly and welcoming place

Kirkbymoorside is clearly a friendly place. Shoppers and visitors evidently chat together on the street, businesses and market traders clearly like to banter with their customers and the stakeholders we engaged with were happy to oblige. Anecdotally we understand the Community Awards are popular too.

All of the above groups would appear to have a good quality of life and are therefore understandably proud of Kirkbymoorside.

8.3 The market is underperforming

The existing street market trades on Wednesdays only and typically contains six or seven stalls. Whilst their quality of products sold is reasonable, the offer overall is underwhelming, especially when compared to nearby offers in Helmsley, Pickering and Malton.

As a market town with a market charter than nearly 800 years old, this is disappointing.

Its fair to say the market is not acting as the anchor it should be for Kirkbymoorside.

The good news is there are lots and lots of opportunities to improve it.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

8.0 Study Conclusions

8.4 Short-term parking availability is a contentious local issue

At face value, there is lots of short-term parking in Kirkbymoorside, as there always seems to be visibly lots of cars parked in the core town centre!

According to businesses and many of the stakeholders we spoke to however, they highlight that there is a significant shortage of car parking in the town centre.

The issue would seem to be the length of time that cars are allowed to park in the core town centre area.

Other locations such as Helmsley allow short term free parking for 20 minutes in the Market Place, whilst Pickering also allows 1 hour's free parking on its Market Place in the heart of the town centre.

Given the relative much bigger offers of the above towns, allowing 2 hours free parking in Kirkbymoorside would seem to be excessive. As in effect, it blocks out short-term parking spaces for too long hence thereby creating the perception that there are insufficient short-term available car parking spaces in Kirkbymoorside.

8.5 Marketing and promotion of the town and its assets is poor

There are a limited number of established but very popular events in Kirkbymoorside, such as the annual 10K run, as well as the Xmas Market and Xmas Lights. These are well attended and well promoted on social media and on online and physical news channels.

The problem is there aren't enough of such popular events to regularly bring people to and enjoy what Kirkbymoorside has to offer.

The other issue is the lack of cross marketing. Whilst many existing attractions in and near Kirkbymoorside promote themselves online and via social media, they don't typically mention or focus on the many things Kirkbymoorside has to offer. They certainly don't highlight or feature other attractions in the area.

Kirkbymoorside would benefit from a dedicated umbrella website focused marketing and communicating the many assets and attractions has to offer, including current & forthcoming events and activities.

A further issue is the dominance of Helmsley, Pickering and Malton when it comes to their share of voice of regional marketing to tourists. Kirkbymoorside literally is often not on the same maps / guides / websites.

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

8.0 Study Conclusions

8.6 Wayfinding and place making signage are weak

It is easy for people to literally drive through Kirkbymoorside on the A170 and completely miss what the town centre has to offer.

In fact, its easy to drive within 250m of the town centre and miss that it exists at all, never mind what it contains or has to offer!

Similarly the market is missing a trick through a lack of promotion on the A170 on Wednesdays when it is trading.

Few of the surrounding assets and attractions near Kirkbymoorside are promoted within the town and vice versa. The many nearby attractions are therefore not physically connected or integrated within the appeal of Kirkbymoorside.

8.8 Kirkbymoorside Town Centre looks and feels smaller than it is

As a result of the lack of effective marketing and promotion, as well as signposting and wayfinding, Kirkbymoorside appears and feels smaller than it is.

This is further compounded by the several visible empty properties in the core town centre area, plus the many non active properties often located between shops there which makes it easy to miss the core businesses highlighted earlier in the Centre and Place Review section.

The many attractions and businesses in Kirkbymoorside need help to make them be noticed and stand out.

8.9 Priority improvements most needed include:

There is a considerable amount of consistency from the findings of all research areas, as to the aspects / areas of improvement most desired by and for Kirkbymoorside. Many of these relate to making it easier and providing more reasons residents and passers-by to choose to visit Kirkbymoorside and not spend elsewhere or online.

Priority improvements needed include:

- Better wayfinding / signposting, as well as sense of arrival
- Better, bigger and more frequent market, including more visiting markets
- Improved parking regime / signage
- Stronger presence online, especially on websites targeting visitors
- More themed events and local celebrations
- Improved community facilities
- Stronger promotion of existing offer
- Improved working together
- Stronger integration of existing local and nearby attractions / assets
- Pro-actively target business categories and occupiers for existing vacant units in the core town centre, as well as for the market
- More effective use of social media to target more frequent visits from local residents and workers.

In short, a town with a clear sense of place, with an improved customer visit experience, better collective working together and much better marketing and promotion of what Kirkbymoorside has to offer.

Recommended Action Plan for Growth

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.1 Future Kirkbymoorside Growth Goals

The following growth goals will help provide a mini town boost to Kirkbymoorside and provide a structure for the recommended tactical growth actions outlined over the next few pages. They are chronologically ordered.

1. Extend and improve the market offer

Build on the existing offer, add more traders, add more choice, add more days, curate program of visiting themed markets and events.

2. Improve the Kirkbymoorside shopping and visitor experience

Improve signage and wayfinding plus the physical environment and facilities available, to encourage residents and visitors to visit more often, use more of the offer and stay longer when they do. Make much more noise about the 70 businesses, plus the experience factors, free parking, lovely town, super independent businesses, great place to meet, greet, chat and recharge etc.

3. Increase the collective benefit of the existing assets and attractions

Engage with businesses and stakeholders with positive PR campaign and provide practical tips for them to work together for the betterment of the town centre for all. Encourage businesses to work together and cross recommend each other. Integrate all assets, in and nearby, collective critical mass will change the appeal of the town.

4. Improve the marketing and promotion of the town centre

Add more events (community, local and regional), develop active web site, engage with and spread the word to other tourist and regional partners. Encourage residents, businesses and visitors to use social media and website reviews to spread the positive stories and information about Kirkbymoorside. Shout about the strengths, create your own maps, ensure Kirkbymoorside is front and centre!

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.2 Extend and improve the market offer

The existing market is underwhelming and not acting as a draw to or anchor for the town. There is considerable benefit to be had by improving the existing market, extending the choice available, improving trader standards, adding more days and encouraging additional visiting markets.

- A. Develop a priority list of new market categories needed. This is likely to include hot food / local produce (e.g. bacon and sausage sandwiches), hot drinks (including coffee specialist), chocolates, preserved meats, cupcakes, plants and flowers, jams and preserves, toiletries, eco-products, prints / photos / posters, confectionery, toffee & fudge, boutique gins / vodka, footwear and hand made soaps amongst many others.
- B. Organise study visits to other leading market towns for inspiration. The aim is to source traders or new product types that do not trade in Helmsley or Pickering.
- C. Develop a prospectus to help sell the market to new traders. Hand deliver this prospectus to suitable operators at other markets.
- D. Define best practice presentation standards for traders to raise the average bar of display techniques.
- E. Target local producers, young traders, artisan makers as well as experienced market traders.
- F. Curate program of visiting and one-off markets.
- G. Align increased promotion activity with improved market.
- H. Add seating and shared tables as part of market offer.



New trader call out / prospectus



Program of visiting themed markets

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.3 Improve the Kirkbymoorside shopping and visitor experience

The following actions will improve the 'day to day' experience of Kirkbymoorside core town offer. They are actions that can be implemented in the relatively short term (within a couple of years) or at least have the plan for implementation commenced / completed in the short term.

- A. Encourage businesses to provide tables and chairs outside their shops and food & beverage units (subject to land ownership compliance).
- B. Engage with landlords / building owners to encourage them to maintain and invest in their shopfronts.
- C. Add more bike parking facilities and safe cycle routes to the town centre. Target more cyclists.
- D. Simplify the parking regime. Based on other successful market towns visited, consider ...
 - 1 hour free parking in heart of town centre (Market Place and upper Piercy End).
 - 2 hour free everywhere else (including anytime at Town Farm Car Park)
 - Paid for parking 2+ hours at Town Farm Car Park. Brand this car park as 'long-term car park'.This will have the benefit of doubling the availability of short term spaces.
- G. Significantly improve the car parking signage and wayfinding, especially to Town Hall Car Park.
- H. Add a new Zebra Crossing in heart of town centre (near / outside George and Dragon).
- I. Define what good experience in Kirkbymoorside is, at all visitor / shopper contact points. Then prepare and implement actions to deliver what is required.
- J. Create better information, maps and plans (see Woodbridge, Suffolk) at all arrival and pre-arrival points.
- K. Provide more rest and recharge places, heritage and community history information.
- L. Complement the "Gateway to the Moors" USP – add more services, information about the area, signposting to the area, with a clear starting point and something unique to Kirkbymoorside, photo opportunity, memory opportunity, reasons to enjoy the town and its offer.



Communal seating outside shops & cafes



Very clear car parking signs

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.4 Increase the collective benefit of the existing assets and attractions

The good news is Kirkbymoorside has many reasons to visit the core town offer, as well as visit other attractions in the area. The bad news is many of these reasons / attractions are hidden / easily missed or not promoted individually as well as collectively. The sum of the whole appears to be less than the parts.

- A. Add better wayfinding signs in core of offer, at car parks and on the access routes from the town centre highlighting the anchors / attractions in the town centre and those nearby.
- B. Add 2 x large and clear wayfinding signs on the A170 200 – 300 m east and west bound from the main roundabout, along the lines of 'Welcome to Kirkbymoorside, Historic Market Town'.
- C. Include visual of the new 'Kirkbymoorside Gate' your photo opportunity for 'Gateway to the Moors'.
- D. Include facility for daily erectable 'Market trading today' signs, or 'XX theme market trading today'.
- E. Add further 2 x signs 50 - 100m east and west bound from the roundabout, along the lines of 'Town centre shops, food and toilets → or ←' as appropriate.
- F. Add a further clear sign at top of Piercy End - 'Welcome to Kirkbymoorside Town Centre'.
- G. Use the same colour palette flags, posters or projecting signs on shops to add critical mass.
- H. Encourage community groups to create their own events and incorporate these within the annual calendar of events. Harness the enthusiasm of local groups, provide support and advice / checklist on how to deliver successful events, provide funding support. Be seen to encourage & be pro-active.
- I. The Memorial Hall has significant potential as a host for events and activities. It would benefit from external and particularly internal refurbishment to play a key role as one of the town centre's anchors / destinations.
- J. Protect the core town centre by resisting any further retail development on the A170.



Effective 'Welcome to the town centre' sign



Clear signage to local assets and attractions

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.5 Improve the marketing and promotion of the town centre

One of Kirkbymoorside's major issues is not so much the lack of assets, attractions or charm, it is the marketing and promotion of them. Many organisations and stakeholders with a vested interest in a successful and sustainable Kirkbymoorside Town Centre are not working together sufficiently effectively, which often results in Kirkbymoorside dropping off the 'map' or minds-eye of potential customers.

- A. Encourage and support the proposed CIO to become a reality, with a clear focus on promotion, events, business and business / stakeholder integration. Harness the enthusiasm of residents & local businesses.
- B. CIO to be also tasked with creating / facilitating an independent town centre business group.
- C. Create a series of online, and paper walking guides, supported by clear signage in the town, aimed at various customer groups, e.g. families, walkers, cyclists, dog walkers, runners, visitors etc. These could be themed e.g. independent shop trail, gourmand tour, arts / culture, history / heritage, ghost tours, green spaces, Kirkbymoorside Attractions Circuit, etc. which will emphasise the range in offer and attractions available.
- D. Create a digital, interactive map with Kirkbymoorside at the centre, with easy and clear links to the various local attractions
- E. Create a dedicated promotional Kirkbymoorside website with integration of all local and nearby assets, attractions, producers etc. Invite them to be part of the website, include them in the Kirkbymoorside offer and experience, promote them and encourage them to promote Kirkbymoorside. See <https://www.visittamworth.co.uk/>



CIC focussed on promotion and events



Spread the love of local businesses

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

9.5 Improve the marketing and promotion of the town centre cont'd.

- F. Create a new Kirkbymoorside Town Centre brand / strapline and encourage businesses and local stakeholders to use and embrace it. 'Gateway to the Moors' could work, or perhaps 'Ryedale's friendliest market town'?
- G. Consider setting up a Kirkbymoorside Loyalty Card, similar to that running in Driffield ... <https://driffieldtowncouncil.gov.uk/loyalty-card-2/>
- H. Provide business support / masterclasses for local businesses in helping them to use social media to promote their business and Kirkbymoorside itself. Celebrate and nurture Kirkbymoorside's many unique businesses.
- I. Create a town centre events planning group.
- J. Curate more events, local, community, countryside, moors, antiques, clearance (Yorkshire Auctioneer) festivals.
- K. Develop the calendar of events, lots of smaller community focussed, and a few big ones.
- L. Create a local History Museum.
- M. Encourage local attractions, clubs and societies to use the town centre.
- N. Compile schedule of empty units, containing key information about the units, including size, asking rent / purchase price, planning permission and contact details for agents. Engage and work with landlords and or their agents to help them be proactive in targeting appropriate occupiers / new businesses.



Example promotional image, including core USP / reason to visit

Kirkbymoorside Feasibility Study & Action Plan for Growth

9.0 Recommended Future Town Centre Growth Plan

Final thoughts on the outlook for Kirkbymoorside

It is very clear that Kirkbymoorside garners much goodwill from residents as well as long-term businesses and stakeholders. The town centre has many positive assets, from the history & heritage, active community, dominance of independent businesses and proximity to several important and attractive nearby assets.

The good news is, in many ways Kirkbymoorside Town Centre already has many of the building blocks already in place for it to have a successful and sustainable future. It is certainly not a place that is already in steep decline.

The main obstacles standing in the way of a prosperous future are limited impact / visual critical mass of the town centre, lack of profile / awareness from the A170 and even within the town. Plus an under performing market, lack of short-term parking, lack of signage & wayfinding and ineffective marketing & promotion (or indeed integration) of the town's many assets, including those nearby.

This study has identified many opportunities to improve the town centre offer and experience, and many of these can be done in the short to medium term, relatively easily long-term. Indeed, many can be addressed with limited or low levels of investment.

There are many opportunities to improve the town centre and secure its long-term future. An essential requirement is to promote the town's various assets / attractions more effectively, so that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. It is this factor that will help secure Kirkbymoorside's place on the map.

Kirkbymoorside Town Centre has the potential to be a fabulous and sustainable asset and place for KTC and NYC.

It will need careful planning, cooperation and hard work to achieve this, and this study provides a clear route map for doing so.

Appendix I

Business Survey Questionnaire

Kirkbymoorside Business Survey 2025

The Retail Group is an independent retail and place research consultancy, which undertakes health-checks and growth plans of town and city centres across the country. We are currently undertaking a study on Kirkbymoorside, funded by North Yorkshire Council, with the objective of identifying the health of the centre, the issues businesses trading in the centre face, improvements wanted and future opportunities available.

As a key local business, we are keen to include your views and experiences of the centre in the study. All information shared with us will be treated as **totally confidential**.

1	Business name:																		
2	What type of business do you operate? <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Retail shop</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Retail services - e.g. hairdressers, nail bar, key cutting, pharmacy, tattooist</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Business services e.g. printing, IT</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Café / restaurant</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Financial services - e.g. estate agent, bank, employment agency, solicitor / accountant</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Market stall - please state</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Pub or bar</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other - please state</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Leisure venue</div> </div>																		
3	In your opinion, what is the main reasons for customers to be in Kirkbymoorside? <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Shopping</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Eating / drinking</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Study nearby</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Live nearby</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Using the retail / financial services</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> The market</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Work nearby</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Commuting / passing through</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Other – please state</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Leisure</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Arts / culture / heritage / tourism</div> </div>																		
4	How often do your customers typically visit Kirkbymoorside? <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Daily</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Once a week</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Once a month</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Twice a week</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Once a fortnight</div> <div style="width: 33%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Less often</div> </div>																		
5	What are your busiest times of day on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays? <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left; width: 33%;">Weekdays</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 33%;">Saturdays</th> <th style="text-align: left; width: 33%;">Sundays</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Before 9am</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Before 9am</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Before 11am</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 9am – 11am</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 9am – 11am</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 2pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 3pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 3pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 2pm – 5pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3pm – 6pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> 3pm – 6pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> After 5pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Do not open on Sundays</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays	<input type="checkbox"/> Before 9am	<input type="checkbox"/> Before 9am	<input type="checkbox"/> Before 11am	<input type="checkbox"/> 9am – 11am	<input type="checkbox"/> 9am – 11am	<input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 2pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 3pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 11am – 3pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 2pm – 5pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 3pm – 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> 3pm – 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> After 5pm	<input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not open on Sundays
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<input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> After 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not open on Sundays																	
6	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center; width: 25%;">Increasing</th> <th style="text-align: center; width: 25%;">Static / Same</th> <th style="text-align: center; width: 25%;">Decreasing</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">How are your customer numbers compared to last year?</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Increasing	Static / Same	Decreasing	How are your customer numbers compared to last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>										
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7	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="width: 60%;">And how about your sales compared to last year?</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	And how about your sales compared to last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>														
And how about your sales compared to last year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>																
8	How satisfied are you with the current performance of Kirkbymoorside as a place to do business? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Neither / nor <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied </div>																		
9	How positive are you about future trading prospects in Kirkbymoorside? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Very optimistic <input type="checkbox"/> Quite optimistic <input type="checkbox"/> Neither / nor <input type="checkbox"/> Quite pessimistic <input type="checkbox"/> Very pessimistic </div>																		
10	To what extent do you agree with the statement ... <i>'Tourism is a major untapped opportunity for Kirkbymoorside'</i> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neither / nor <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree </div>																		

Please Turn Over

Kirkbymoorside Business Survey 2025

- 11 Please identify which of the following are the highest **customer experience** improvements you would like to see in Kirkbymoorside. ***Tick all that apply***

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events to attract customers into town | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer information | <input type="checkbox"/> More social media activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More marketing & promotion of centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More recycling points | <input type="checkbox"/> More short-term free parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival | <input type="checkbox"/> More long-term free parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops & businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Better signage for car parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management | <input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion | |

- 12 Generally, for the long term, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside **offer** improve? ***Tick all that apply***

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers / attractions | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved regular market | <input type="checkbox"/> Better offer / facilities for tourists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options | <input type="checkbox"/> Stronger artisan market | <input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators | <input type="checkbox"/> A town centre business group | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More variety in general | <input type="checkbox"/> More housing in town centre | |

- 13 Thinking specifically about the **public realm**, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside improved? ***Tick all that apply***

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage & wayfinding | <input type="checkbox"/> More public art | <input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved pavements | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer seating | |

- 14 What would you say are the main reasons / attractions / businesses that bring customers into Kirkbymoorside?

- 15 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Kirkbymoorside?

Kirkbymoorside Strengths

Kirkbymoorside Weaknesses

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

- 16 And finally, are there any other comments about Kirkbymoorside you would like to add or make?

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated.

Please hand your completed survey to the researcher who gave it to you. Alternatively feel free to take a photo of both sides of your completed survey and then email it to paul.frater@theretailgroup.co.uk, or send it by text or WhatsApp to 07753 824042.

Finally, if none of the above options are possible, please post to The Retail Group, Dunnings Oak Offices, Dunnings Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4AT.

Appendix II

Stakeholder Survey Questionnaire

Kirkbymoorside Growth Plan - Stakeholder Survey

The Retail Group is an independent retail and place research consultancy, which undertakes health-checks and growth plans of town and city centres across the country. We are currently undertaking a study on Kirkbymoorside, funded by North Yorkshire Council, with the objective of identifying the health of the centre, the issues businesses trading in the centre face, improvements wanted and future opportunities available.

As a key local stakeholder, we are keen to include your views and experiences of the centres in the study. All information shared with us will be treated as **totally confidential**.

Stakeholder Name: _____ Organisation / Company: _____

What is your involvement with Kirkbymoorside? _____

1 What would you say are the **three** main strengths and weaknesses of Kirkbymoorside?

Kirkbymoorside Strengths

Kirkbymoorside Weaknesses

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2 Please identify which of the following are the highest **customer experience** improvements you would like to see in Kirkbymoorside. **Tick all that apply**

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Events to attract customers into town | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer information | <input type="checkbox"/> More social media activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More marketing & promotion of centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Better security / policing | <input type="checkbox"/> Community activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More recycling points | <input type="checkbox"/> More short-term free parking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better sense of arrival | <input type="checkbox"/> More long-term free parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better visibility of shops & businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Better signage for car parking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better waste management | <input type="checkbox"/> Less congestion | |

3 Generally, for the long term, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside **offer** improve? **Tick all that apply**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More leisure offers / attractions | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved regular market | <input type="checkbox"/> Better offer / facilities for tourists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More daytime food options | <input type="checkbox"/> Stronger artisan market | <input type="checkbox"/> More arts / culture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More evening restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Additional specialist markets | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More independent operators | <input type="checkbox"/> A town centre business group | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More variety in general | <input type="checkbox"/> More housing in town centre | |

4 Thinking specifically about the **public realm**, how would you like to see Kirkbymoorside improved? **Tick all that apply**

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer toilets | <input type="checkbox"/> More trees / green space |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved signage & wayfinding | <input type="checkbox"/> More public art | <input type="checkbox"/> More focus on heritage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved pavements | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner / tidier | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (pls specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better access to shops | <input type="checkbox"/> More customer seating | |

Please Turn Over

Kirkbymoorside Growth Plan - Stakeholder Survey

5 What would you say are the main reasons / attractions / businesses that bring customers into Kirkbymoorside?

6 To what extent do you agree with the statement ... *'Tourism is a major untapped opportunity for Kirkbymoorside'*

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

7 How satisfied are you with the current performance of Kirkbymoorside as a place to do business?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

8 How positive are you about future trading prospects in Kirkbymoorside?

☐ Very optimistic ☐ Quite optimistic ☐ Neither / nor ☐ Quite pessimistic ☐ Very pessimistic

9 What are your growth / improvement aspirations for Kirkbymoorside? What kind of place would you like it to be in five years?

10 And finally, are there any other comments about Kirkbymoorside you would like to add or make?

Thank you for your assistance, it is much appreciated.

Please email the completed survey to paul.frater@theretailgroup.co.uk or take a photo of both sides and send them by text / WhatsApp to 07753 824042.



informed solutions

The Retail Group

Informed Solutions

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