

# Shirebrook – Town Centre Health Check Summary

## Key Indicators

Vitality / Diversity of  
Town Centre Uses Score

2020

2021

2022

2.7 /3

2.7 /3

2.4 /3

Percentage of  
Vacant Units

13%

11%

12%

Physical and  
Environmental  
Quality Score

1.7 /3

1.7 /3

1.7 /3

Footfall

3/3

1.8/3

2.1/3

OVERALL  
HEALTHCHECK  
SCORE

GOOD  
2.4 out  
of 3

GOOD  
2.0 out  
of 3

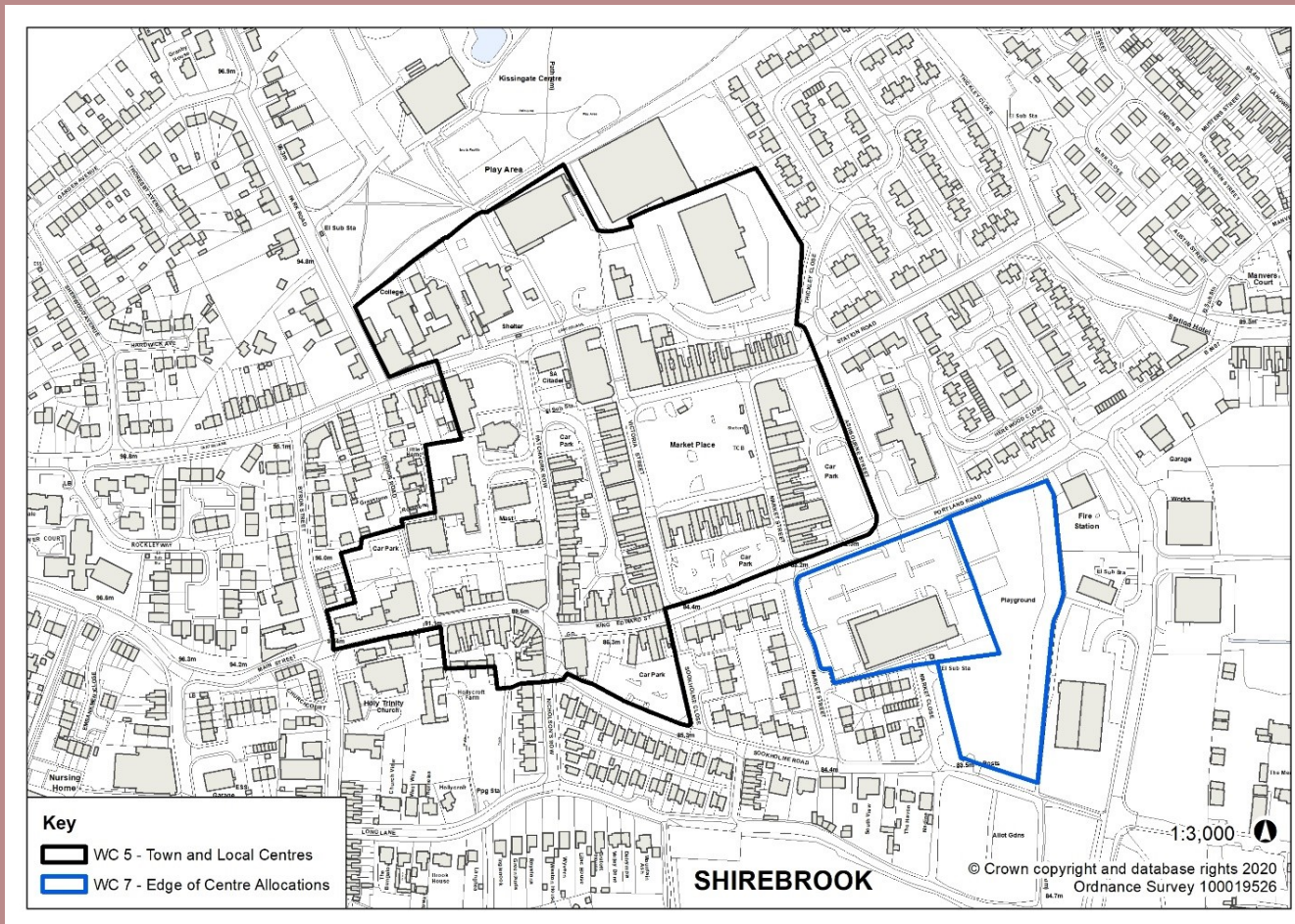
GOOD  
2.1 out  
of 3



# Introduction

Shirebrook is one of the District's largest towns and has the second largest number of property units in its town centre. As a result, its town centre is one of four recognised at the top of the District's retail hierarchy and it provides a range of services and amenities not widely available in the surrounding smaller settlements.

Shirebrook's town centre is focussed around its market square but includes the surrounding streets of Patchwork Row and stretches of King Edward Street and Carter Lane. The market square is notable for being one of the largest market squares in England and hosts a market of up to 90 stalls that is held four days a week.



# Structure of the Town Centre

## Designated Town Centre

To ensure that the vitality and viability of Shirebrook town centre is supported and that it is retained as the focus for town centre uses and the heart of community life, the Local Plan for Bolsover District has designated the area shown on the plan above.

This designated town centre is principally arranged around a market square and is bound by four streets; Market Street, Market Place, Victoria Square, and Station Road. The majority of the units on the market square are small, independently owned, local businesses.

The Shirebrook Leisure Centre and Town Park bound the town centre to the north; residential areas to the east, west and south; and an industrial area to the south east on Portland Drive, which eventually leads to Brook Park.

Large commercial and community units are located to the north of the town centre including Aldi, Top Cat and the Carter Lane Community Centre. While other community facilities are generally located to the west and south west including: Shirebrook Library, Health Centre and places of worship.

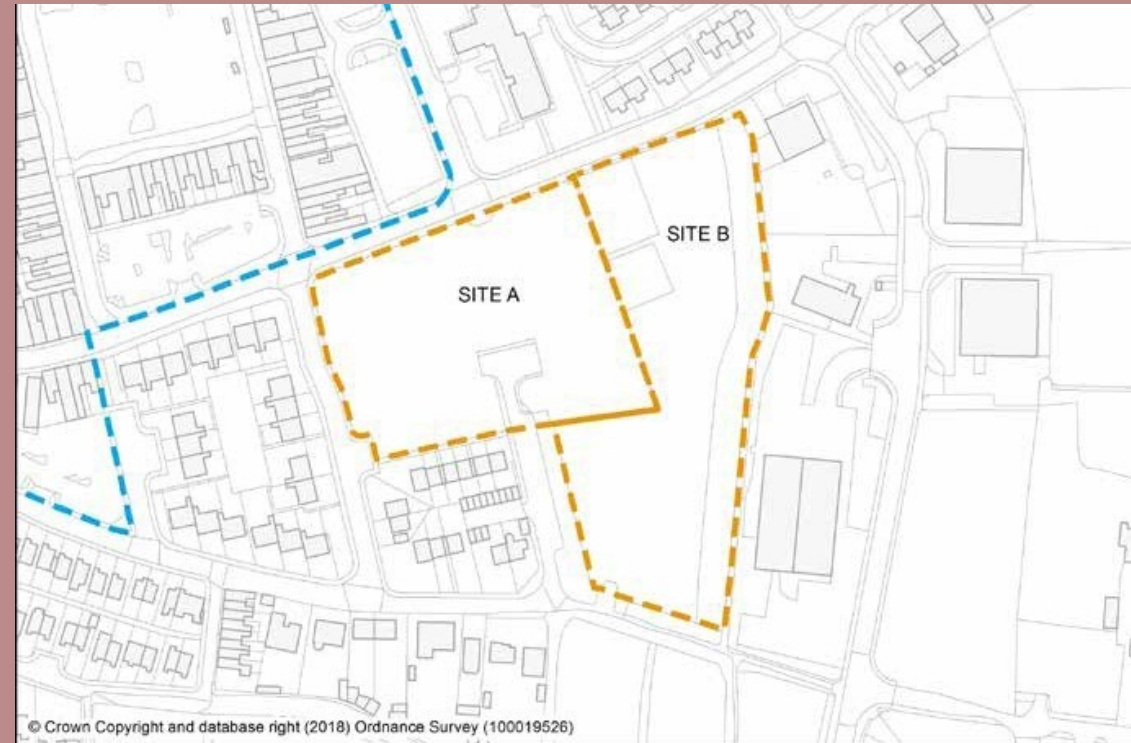
Shirebrook town centre has two competing retail and service centres of sub-regional significance within 10 kilometres (Mansfield and Sutton-in-Ashfield) and two competing retail and service centres of more local significance within 10 kilometres (Bolsover and Clowne).



## Designated Edge of Town Centre Allocations

To support the growth and prosperity of Shirebrook town centre the Local Plan for Bolsover District has allocated two edge of town centre sites to provide additional space for town centre uses (see plan below).

Site A – Land at Portland Road (West) was allocated specifically for retail use and this has been successfully brought forward with a new Lidl foodstore (A1 Convenience) being built recently.



Site B – Land at Portland Road (East) was allocated for a range of uses that could include retail, office, leisure, residential or other town centres uses or community facilities. This site has been granted planning permission for a residential development.

# Vitality / Diversity of Town Centre Uses

## Survey dates

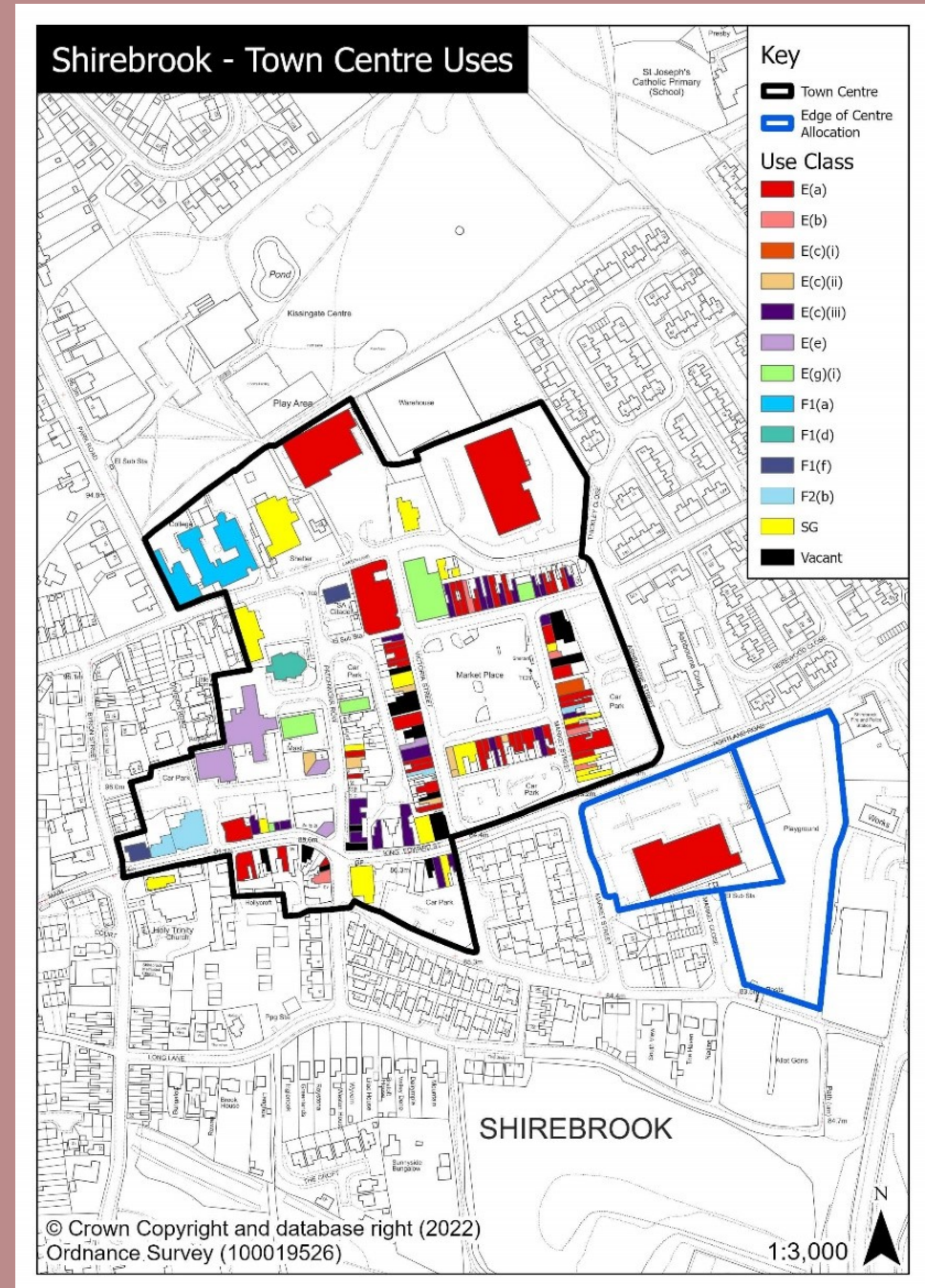
To inform the vitality and diversity of Shirebrook's town centre, a survey of all property units within the town centre boundary was carried out in May 2022.

## Survey findings

The survey of Shirebrook Town Centre revealed that there are 145 separate property units including ground floor residential and a total of 22,472m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floorspace.

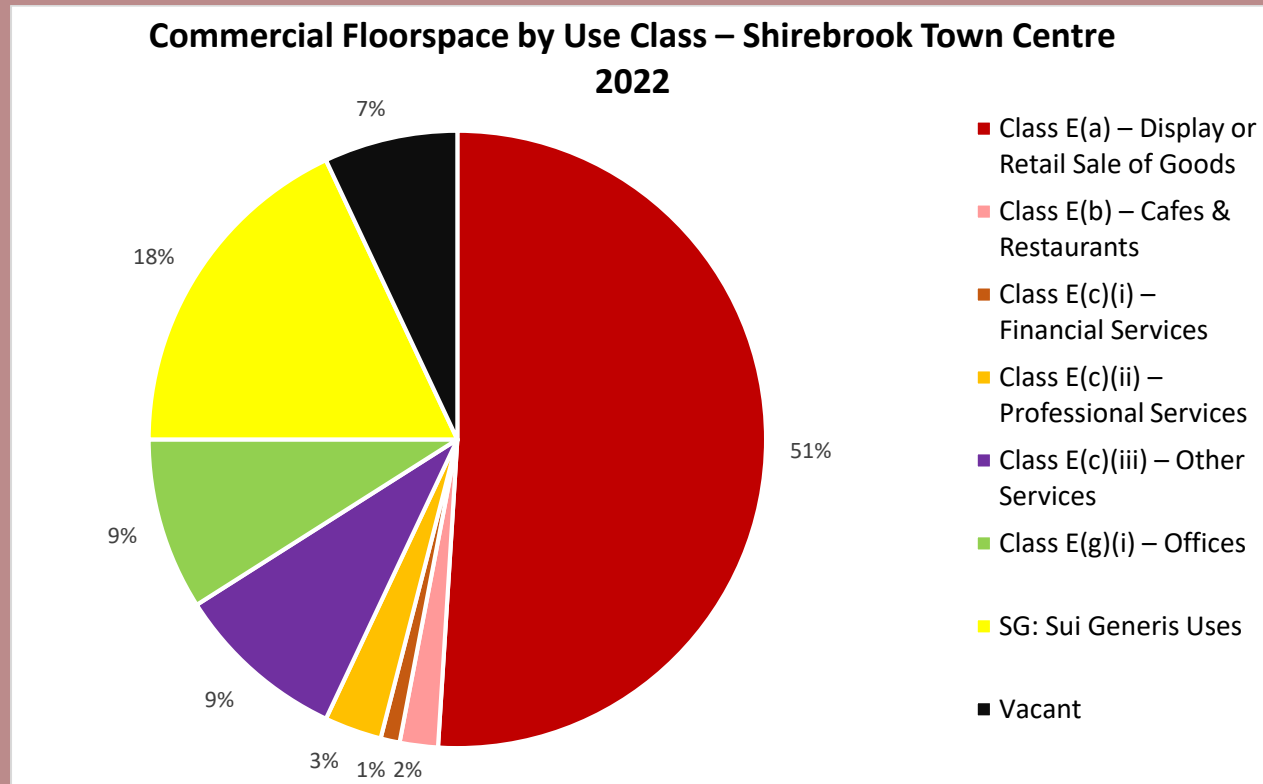
The table below shows the number of units and total floorspace identified during the survey.

Shirebrook Town Centre			
Land Use Class	Description	Number of Units	Total Floorspace m <sup>2</sup>
E(a)	Display or Retail Sale of Goods	42	9,767
E(b)	Cafes & Restaurants	4	316
E(c)(i)	Financial Services	1	169
E(c)(ii)	Professional Services	6	564
E(c)(iii)	Other Services	24	1,851
E(d)	Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	0	0
E(e)	Health/ Medical Services	4	1,312
E(f)	Crèches/ Day Nurseries	0	0
E(g)(i)	Offices	5	1,727
F	Local Community & Learning	7	2,229
SG	Sui Generis Uses	17	3,521
	Vacant	15	1,309
	Residential	20	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>22,765</b>



## Analysis of commercial use

There are 114 commercial properties providing 18,931m<sup>2</sup> floorspace in Shirebrook town centre. These can be broken down into the following land use classes.



Land Use Class	Number of Units	Total Floorspace m <sup>2</sup>	%
Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods	42	9,767	51
Class E(b) – Cafes & Restaurants	4	316	2
Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services	1	169	1
Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services	6	541	3
Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services	24	1,851	9
Class E(g)(i) – Offices	5	1,727	9
SG: Sui Generis Uses	16	3,078	18
Vacant	15	1,309	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>18,931</b>	<b>100</b>

### *Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods*

51% of the total commercial floorspace in Shirebrook is used by retailers selling / displaying goods, a total of 9,767 m<sup>2</sup>. This is slightly down from the 53% and 10,128 m<sup>2</sup>. There are 40 units selling comparison / convenience goods in Shirebrook town centre. These uses are spread evenly throughout the centre. The majority of the E(a) use floorspace in the centre, approximately 62%, is provided by the three large national multipliers; Aldi, Cooperative and Lidl, and the furniture store, Top Cat. 2,298 m<sup>2</sup>, 22% of the retail floorspace is devoted to comparison goods, and therefore convenience goods dominate with 78% of retail floorspace.

### *Class E(b) – Cafes & Restaurants*

There are 4 cafes and restaurant uses in the centre accounting for 2% of the town centre's floorspace, 316 m<sup>2</sup>. This is a reduction from the 7 units accounting for 528 m<sup>2</sup> last year. These uses tend to be distributed evenly throughout the centre; on Market Street, King Edward Street, Station Road, Main Street and Patchwork Row. Of the 7 E(b) uses in the centre, 3 are cafés, only 1 is a restaurant.

### *Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services*

Financial service units account for 1% of the total floorspace in the town centre, 169m<sup>2</sup>. There is 1 unit of this type in the centre, a Lloyds TSB bank, on Market Street.

### *Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services*

Professional services (other than health or medical services), make up 3% of the total commercial floorspace in the centre. There are 6 professional services in the centre, 541 m<sup>2</sup>, one less than last year, these services include veterinaries, opticians, solicitors, a funeral directors and estate agents. These uses tend to be distributed throughout the centre, the majority however are based on Market Place.

### *Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services*

Other services, including retailers that provide services; such as hair and beauty salons, tattooists, dog groomers and the post office account for 10% (up from 9%) of the total commercial floorspace, 1,851m<sup>2</sup>. There are 24 of these uses in the centre, the same as the previous year, and these uses tend to be located predominantly on Station Road, however, there are other units throughout the centre on King Edward Street, Victoria Street, Market Street, Patchwork Row and Market Place.

### *Class E(d) – Indoor sport, recreation or fitness*

There were no Class E(d) – Indoor sport, recreation or fitness uses, in Shirebrook centre at the time of the survey.

### *Class E(g)(i) – Offices*

Administrative / operational office use accounts for 9% of the total floorspace in the town centre, 1,727m<sup>2</sup>. There are 5 of these uses in the centre, including the Job Centre and Shirebrook Town Hall, both of which are on Station Road, and both the Unemployed Workers Centre and BT Telephone Exchange on Patchwork Row, and finally Launder's Design & Build on Main Street.

### *SG: Sui Generis Uses*

Sui Generis Uses make up 17% of Shirebrook town centre's commercial floorspace. There are 17 such uses in the centre. These uses include 8 hot food takeaways which are spread through the centre, 4 public houses which are likewise spread through the centre, 2 betting shops, and a petrol station on Carter Lane.

**Table Summarising National Multiples in Shirebrook**

<b>National Multiple</b>		
<b>Type of Retailer</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
Financial and Professional Services	1	Lloyd's TSB Bank PLC
Convenience Retailers	4	Co-operative Supermarket, Aldi, Bargain Booze, Lidl
Comparison Retailers	2	Rowland's Pharmacy, Ashgate Charity Shop
Misc.	2	William Hill, Betfred
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	





## Conclusions

The health check assesses the overall vitality / diversity of Shirebrook's town centre uses using the following established scoring system.

	Very poor (0 points)	Poor (1 Point)	Fair (2 points)	Good (3 points)	Total
<b>Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods</b>	No Convenience Retail	Under 15 retail units, OR, under 2,500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS retail floorspace.	15 or more retail units, OR, over 2,500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS retail floorspace.	20 or more retail units, OR, over 5,000m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS retail floorspace	3
<b>Class E(b) &amp; Class SG – Pubs, Cafes &amp; Restaurants</b>	No Pubs, Cafés & Restaurants	3 and under A3 and A4 units, OR, under 1,000m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace	4 or more A3 and A4 units, OR, over 1,500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace	7 or more A3 and A4 units, OR, over 2,500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace	3
<b>Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services</b>	No Financial Services	2 and under financial service units, OR, under 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS financial service floorspace. No banks.	3 or more financial service units, OR, over 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS financial service floorspace.	5 or more financial service units, OR, over 750m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS financial service floorspace.	1
<b>Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services</b>	No Professional Services	2 and under professional service units, OR, under 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS professional service	3 or more professional service units, OR, over 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS professional service	5 or more professional service units, OR, over 750m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS professional service floorspace.	3
<b>Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services</b>	No Service Retail	Under 10 Service units, OR, under 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS service floorspace.	10 or more Service units, OR, over 750m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS service floorspace.	15 or more Service units, OR, over 1,000m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS service floorspace	3
<b>Class E(g)(i) – Offices</b>	No Office Use	2 and under units, OR, under 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS floorspace	3 or more units, OR, over 500m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS floorspace	5 or more units, OR, over 750m <sup>2</sup> of GROSS floorspace	3
<b>Number of National Multiple Retailers</b>	No National Multiple Retailers	Under 5 National Multiple Retailers	5 or more National Multiple Retailers	10 or more National Multiple Retailers	2

Against this, Shirebrook town centre scored 'good' for the amount of retail services, public houses and cafes/ restaurant units it has, However, the town centre scored poorly in terms of the amount of financial services present., and 'fair' for the number of national multipliers in the centre. This gives it a rating of "Good" overall and a score of 2.5 out of 3, down from the 2.7 out of 3 last year.

# Vacant Units in the Town Centre

## Survey findings

Based on the May 2022 survey, 15 of the non-residential units within the town centre boundary were found to be vacant – leading to a vacancy rate of 12%, an increase of 1% from the previous year. The amount of vacant floorspace at the time of survey was 1,309 m<sup>2</sup> up by 300 m<sup>2</sup> on the previous year, and this accounts for approximately 7% of the town centre's total floorspace. The size of the units is generally small with the largest unit the recently vacated former Fulton Foods, 310 m<sup>2</sup>

5 of the vacant units are located on King Edward Street, on the approach to the town centre and 4 of the units are located on Victoria Street on the western side of the square. Whilst the level of vacancy is high it is still below the 13% from 2019, it represents a key area where the health of the town centre could be improved.

## Length of time units have been vacant

Out of the 15 vacant units, 8 have become vacant within the last year, however, 7 out of the previous year's 14 vacant units have come back into commercial use. 6 of the units have been vacant since 2019 and a few have been vacant for much longer. 3 of these 6 more long term vacancies are located on King Edward Street.

The updated picture for vacant properties will inform the Council's Vacant Town Centre Building project and further reductions in the number of vacancies will be pursued.



# Town Centre Physical and Environmental Quality

## Survey dates

To inform the physical and environmental quality of Shirebrook's town centre, a survey of the town centre was carried out in May 2022.

## Survey findings

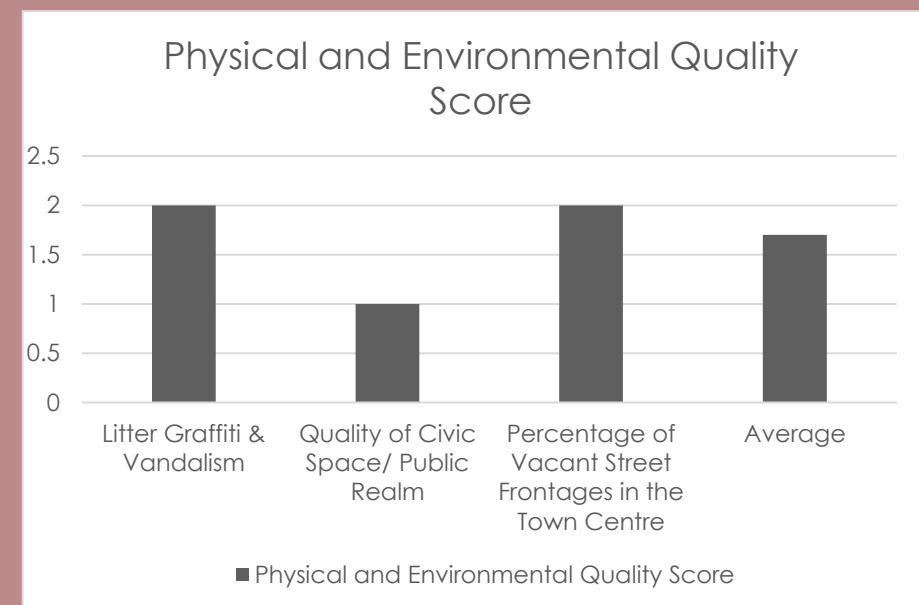
The central Market Place is the focus of the town centre and thus its physical and environment quality is key to the health of the town centre. At present the Market Place looks dated, with limited aesthetic appeal (see aerial photo on next page), and despite recent environmental improvements unfortunately the square space is not yet an attractive place to dwell. Some shopfronts still look old and tired but some have benefitted from the colourful patterned roller shutter scheme in the last few years, significantly brightening up the street scene around the Market square.

In terms of features, the Market Place includes a number of trees, raised planting area, benches, bus shelters, street lights, a central CCTV mast and a few laid out paths across the square space. However, due to the size of the Market Place, these tend to look isolated and not demonstrate a co-ordinated and legible space.

The quality of these features is also poor and planted areas look bare and several gaps exist, giving an appearance of a lack of investment or concern for the area.

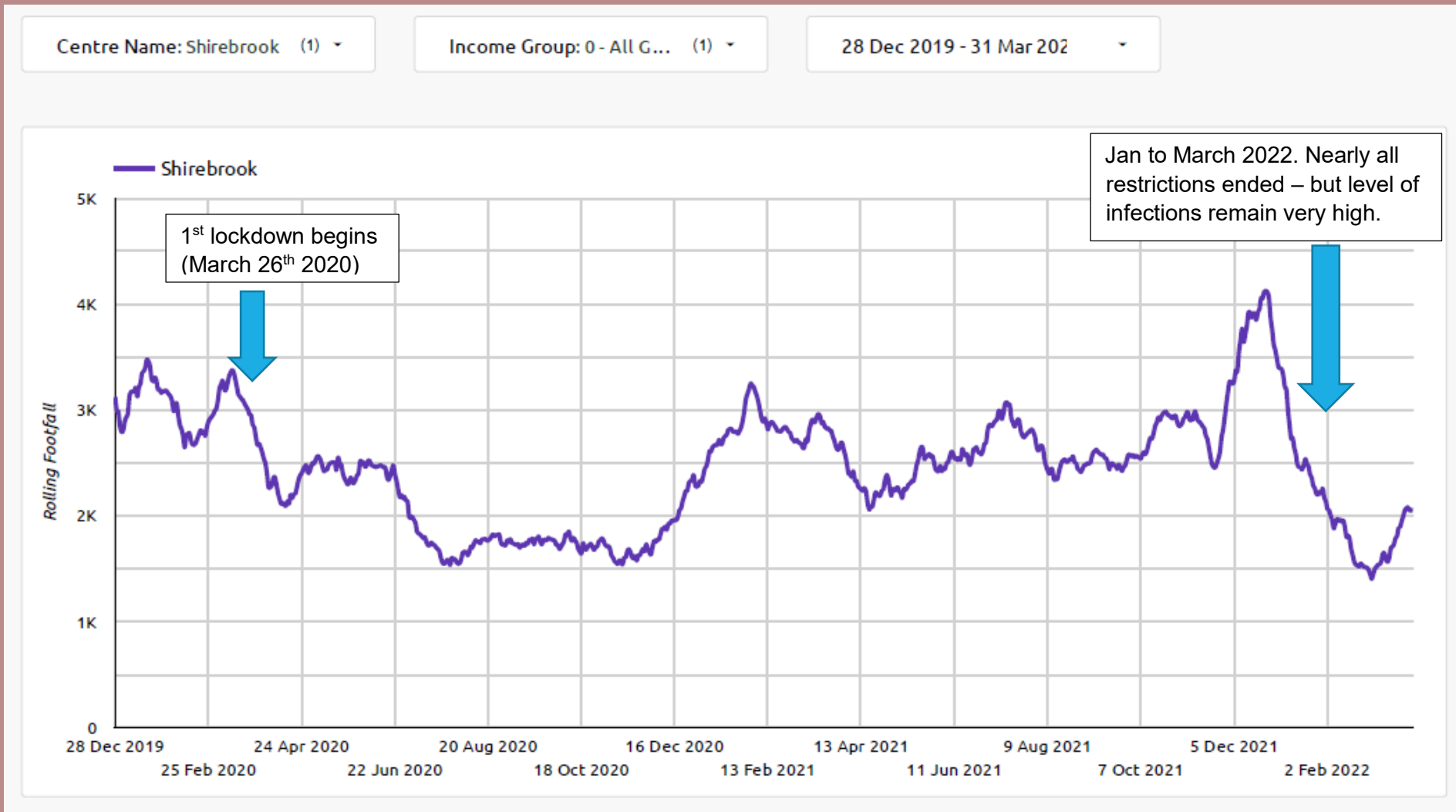
It was also noted that the Market Place is used for car parking for local vendors, detracting from pedestrian use and as a space for civic activity.

Based on this assessment, Shirebrook town centre achieved a rating of "Fair" and a score of 1.7 out of 3 on the town centre Physical and Environmental Quality matrix.





# Footfall Monitoring 2019 - 2022



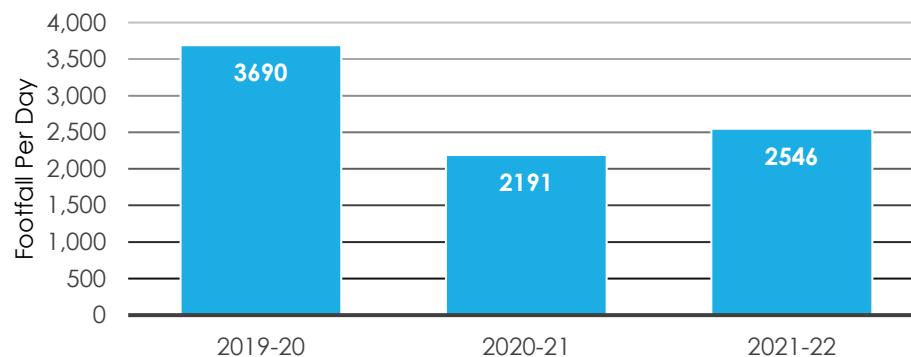
The above graph shows the levels of footfall in Shirebrook town centre starting in late December 2019 through to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, covering the period before, during and the end of the pandemic. Included on the graph are 2 milestones that may explain the dips or rises in footfall that followed.

The average daily footfall in Shirebrook Town Centre between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was 3,690 people per day. The following year, including all 3 lockdowns the daily average fell to 2,191 – a drop of 40%.

During the last year the daily average rose again to 2,546 people per day, so a 16% increase on the previous year, but still 31% lower than the pre-pandemic daily average figure of 2019/2020.

Converting this information into a health check indicator by using the 2019/2020 figure as a baseline and also awarded maximum points, so 100% and 3 out of 3. The 2020/2021 figure is therefore 1.8 / 3 and the 2021//2022 score is therefore 2.1 / 3.

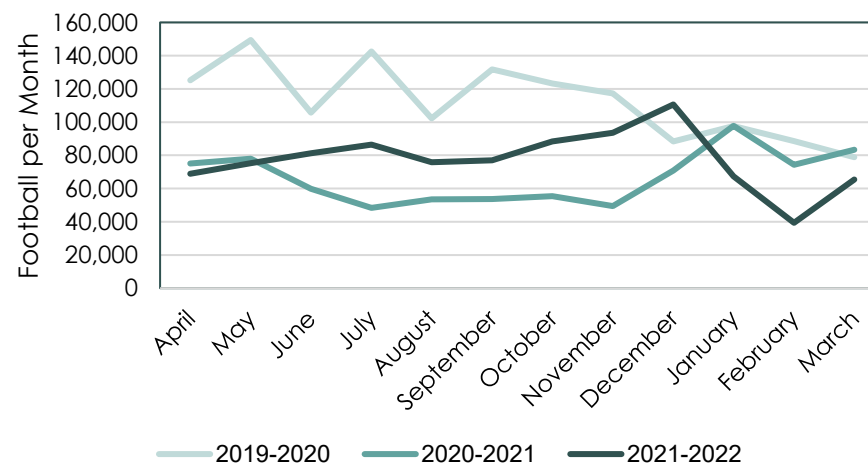
**Average Daily Footfall for Shirebrook Town Centre  
1st April 2019 - 31st March 2022**



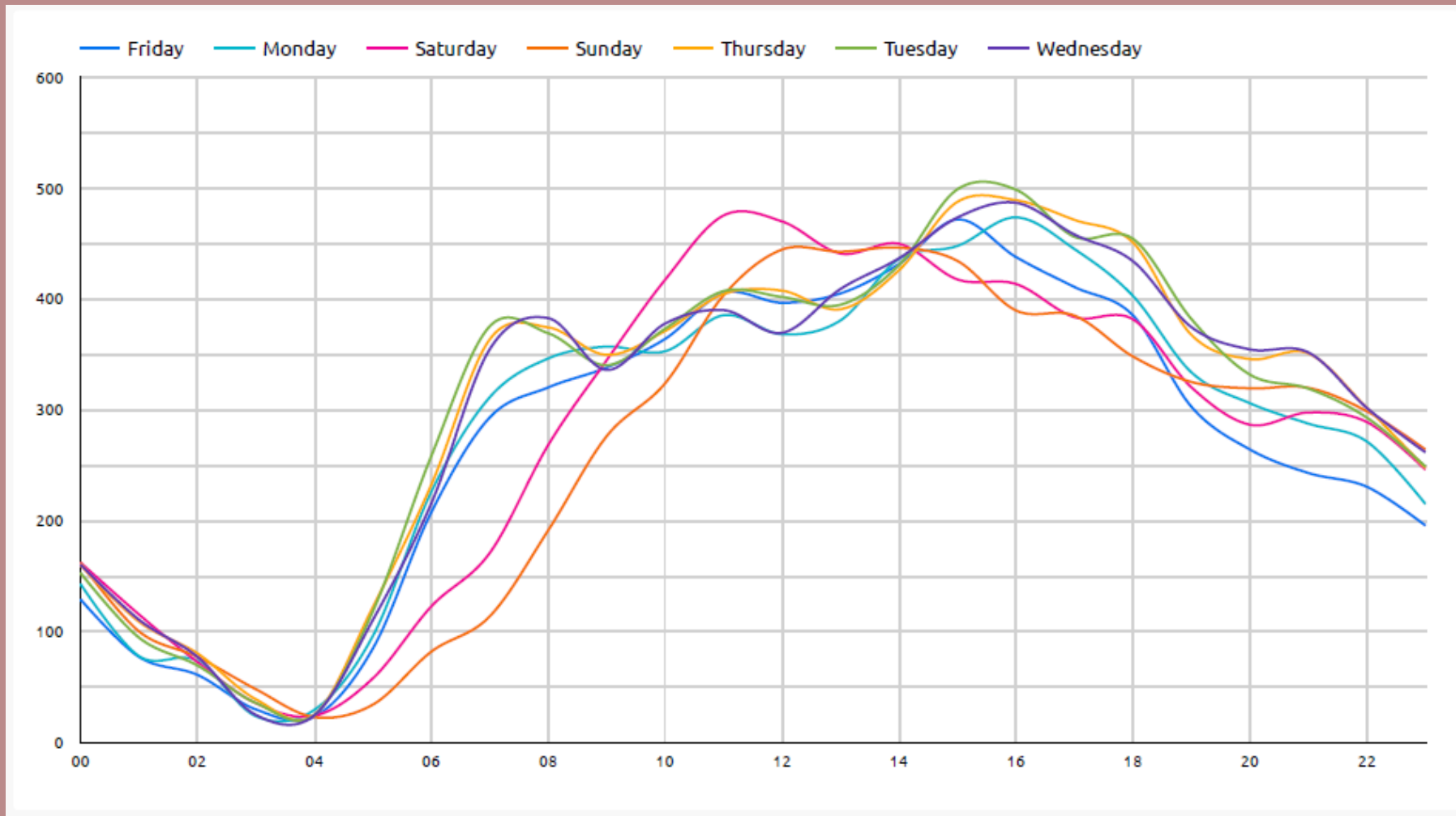
The average monthly footfall shows a similar pattern with the highest average in the pre-pandemic year (light grey line), the lowest average in 2020/2021 (dark green line) and an improved performance in 2021/2022 (black line).

In the pre-pandemic year there were clear spikes during May, July and September with a levelling off from December onwards, during early autumn. Last year (black line) there was a peak in December before dropping considerably in February.

**Average Footfall Per Month for Shirebrook Town Centre  
1st April 2019 - 31st March 2022**



## Average Hourly Footfall in Bolsover Town Centre 2019 - 2022



The graph shows that the times of busiest footfall within Shirebrook Town Centre took place between 10 am and 18.00 pm. The highest average was 500 per hour at 15.00 pm on a Tuesday. Between 10 and 12 on a Saturday there are on average 75 more people than on any other day between those times.

Key Indicators: Changes between 2020, 2021 & 2022 summaries	2020	2021	2022
<p><b><u>Vitality / Diversity of Town Centre Uses</u></b>  Overall the vitality and diversity of uses in the town centre have broadly remained the same between the surveys carried out in May 2019, April 2021 and May 2022, despite the economic challenges of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown arrangements for town centres across the country. For 2 years the town centre scored 2.7, in 2022 dropping to 2.5 in 2022, but all overall 'good' for the diversity of its town centre uses.</p> <p>On the ground there have been some minor changes, with some businesses closing and others moving in, but for the most part the overall diversity of uses in the town centre has remained stable. Within this picture, there is a slight decrease in the number of recognisable National Multipliers (National Brands) in the town centre – generally a strong indicator of the health of a town centre. In 2019 there were 12 national brands in the centre and in 2022 this number has dropped to 9.</p>	2.7 / 3	2.7 / 3	2.5 / 3
<p><b><u>Vacancies</u></b>  The vacancy rate in the town centre has changed. In the May 2019 survey and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the vacancy rate was 13% with 16 vacant properties in the town centre, equating to a total of 1,232m<sup>2</sup> of empty floorspace. In 2021 the vacancy rate is now lower at 11% with 14 vacant properties in the town centre, with a total floorspace of 1,008m<sup>2</sup>. The vacancy rate has now increased to 12% with 1,309 floorspace (higher than 2019).</p> <p>There are a number of factors that influence this key indicator but the Council's greater focus on trying to address this issue through the Vacant Town Centre Buildings project will have played a part in reducing the number of vacancies in the town centre.</p>	13%	11%	12%
<p><b><u>Town Centre Physical and Environmental Quality</u></b>  There has been little in the way of change between the surveys as far as the physical and environmental quality of the centre goes. The quality of the centre is still 'Fair' and there are still improvements that could be made through the delivery of the planned Shirebrook Market Place: <i>Reimagined</i> project.</p>	1.7 / 3	1.7 / 3	1.7 / 3
<p><b><u>Footfall</u></b>  The 2019/2020 figure can be seen as a baseline and therefore scores 100%. 3 out of 3. The 2020/2021 figure is therefore 1.8 / 3 and the 2021//2022 score reflecting the improving footfall is therefore 2.1 / 3.</p>	3/3	1.8	2.1
<p><b><u>Overall Health Check Score</u></b>  Given the clear economic challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, between the 2020 and 2021, the Town Centre Health Check summaries the overall score for Shirebrook town centre has not yet reached the levels of 2020, and has improved slightly since last year mainly as a result of higher levels of footfall.</p>	2.4 / 3	2.0 / 3	2.1/3



# Key Areas for Improvement

## **1) Continue to support a good mix of uses**

At the time of the 2022 survey, Shirebrook town centre contained a good mix of uses and the recent investment in the form of Lidl on the edge-of-centre allocation on Portland Street shows positive growth. However, supporting the comparison goods and professional businesses sectors remains an important task.

## **2) Tackle the vacant buildings**

Whilst vacant buildings do not dominate the town centre, there is some evidence that a number of the premises potentially suffer from long-term vacancy. The reasons for this should continue to be investigated and addressed through the Vacant Town Centre Buildings project and new uses should be actively encouraged within the buildings, particularly those around the Market Place.

## **3) Improve the physical and environmental quality of the Market Place**

The need to improve the environmental quality of the Market Place remains the most important area for improvement and the planned improvements through the Shirebrook Market Place: *Reimagined* project should continue to be progressed. The planned physical improvements should be accompanied by projects to enliven and animate this important civic space to help it become a better used, more frequently visited and economically beating heart of Shirebrook.

## **4) Positively manage the town centre**

To ensure that Shirebrook town centre continues to be supported, a well thought out positive town centre management strategy, supported by both officer time and financial resources, should be prepared. In doing this, a stronger partnership between town centre traders, stakeholders and the public authorities should continue to be developed that seeks to improve the visitor offer, tackle vacant units and encourage local schemes to encourage greater footfall across the whole town centre. This management strategy should then be implemented and sustained.