TWO HOUR FREE PARKING SCHEME REVIEW:

INFORMATION PACK FOR BID DIRECTORS

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BOGNOR REGIS
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This document is an information pack prepared by the BRBID COO for the BRBID Board of Directors, regarding the review of the two-hour free parking scheme in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton. The document provides evidence from various sources on the benefits and costs of the scheme, the views and preferences of businesses and the community, the alternatives and options for the scheme's delivery, and the externally evidenced factors that influence town centre vitality and viability. The document also presents the view of the BRBID COO, who, in light of ADC Parking's position that the scheme delivered through physical discs is unquantifiable and unsustainable, recommends that the BID should be open to the idea of alternative outcomes that benefit the town and exploring other ways that parking income could be used to support town centre footfall. The document concludes with a summary of key research and recommendations from experts on place management and invites BID Directors to consider the evidence and the rationale for the BID's approach as a member of the Working Party.

INTRODUCTION

The following information has been collated for BID Directors to support the BID COO's representation of business interests at the ADC Free Parking Scheme Working Group. To be absolutely clear – ADC are not proposing an end to two-hour parking provision. Through the formation of a Working Party and explicitly stated in that working party's Terms of Reference, ADC have communicated a willingness to continue a free parking scheme to support town centre footfall going forwards. However, what has been made equally clear, on multiple occasions, through multiple charts and graphs and spreadsheets, is that the scheme as currently delivered is unquantifiably costly at a time when budgets are being curtailed, funding opportunities are being withdrawn, personnel crucial to progressing our businesses' strategic priorities are being made redundant and key posts are being left unfilled, and where already over-stretched departments are being amalgamated, spreading the jam of Place Management expertise even more thinly.

In preparing this information pack for BID Directors, I have drawn together evidence from multiple surveys and consultations to determine what is most important to businesses and the wider community, and the commitments made in the BID's 2023-2028 Business Plan. I have combed through numerous research papers exploring the link between parking, free parking and town centre footfall, and collated recommendations from experts on Place Management on recommendations for town centre vitality and viability in a post-Covid world, where out of town retail, online shopping, home delivery and home working are now an established norm.

I have tried, as far as is possible, to present useful information in a balanced and unbiased way. Where content reflects my own opinion, interpretation, or a specific recommendation to Directors, this is made clear. Directors are asked to consider the evidence provided, and the rationale for the BID pursuing an open minded, exploratory approach to the comprehensive review, in full knowledge that the response from the business and wider community will most likely be critical.

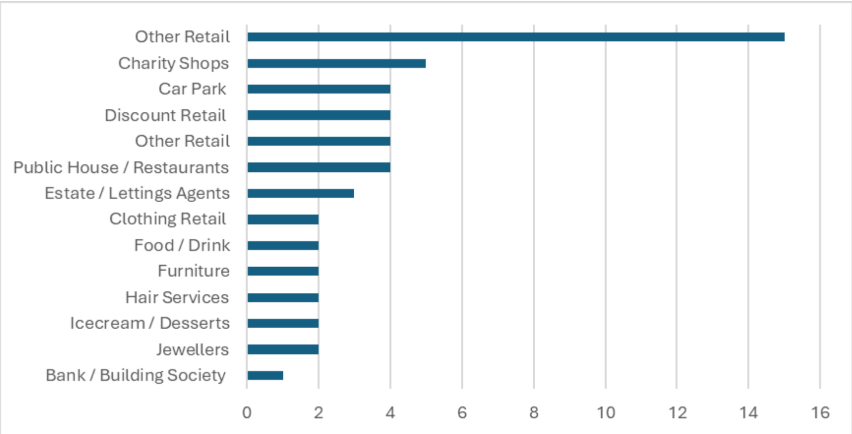
WHAT DO BID LEVY PAYING BUSINESSES WANT?

EVIDENCE BASE: BID Consultation with levy paying businesses, March 2022.

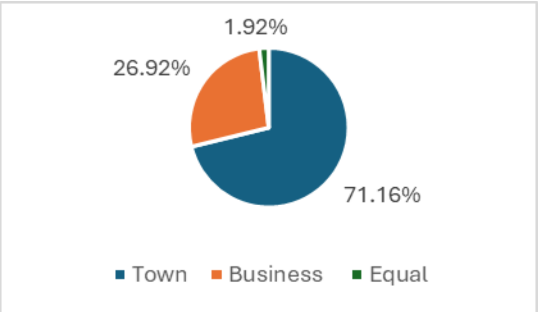
NB: While this survey was linked specifically to the impact of BID activity, our (previous) funding and partnership role makes it a reliable evidence base with respect to business sentiment regards the two-hour parking scheme.

- Total of 52 responses to survey
- 14 different types of business categories represented.
- Results identified significant differences of opinion on what actions would be most impactful to the town between national and independent businesses.
- The largest industry category of respondents was "Other Retail", representing 29% of total responses.
- 65% of respondents represented independent businesses, 24% represented national chains, 11% of responses were linked to Council owned-car parks. They did not respond to the parking question because of the conflict of interest.

BUSINESS CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS (%)



BUSINESSES OPINION ON WHERE BID LEVY SHOULD BE FOCUSED



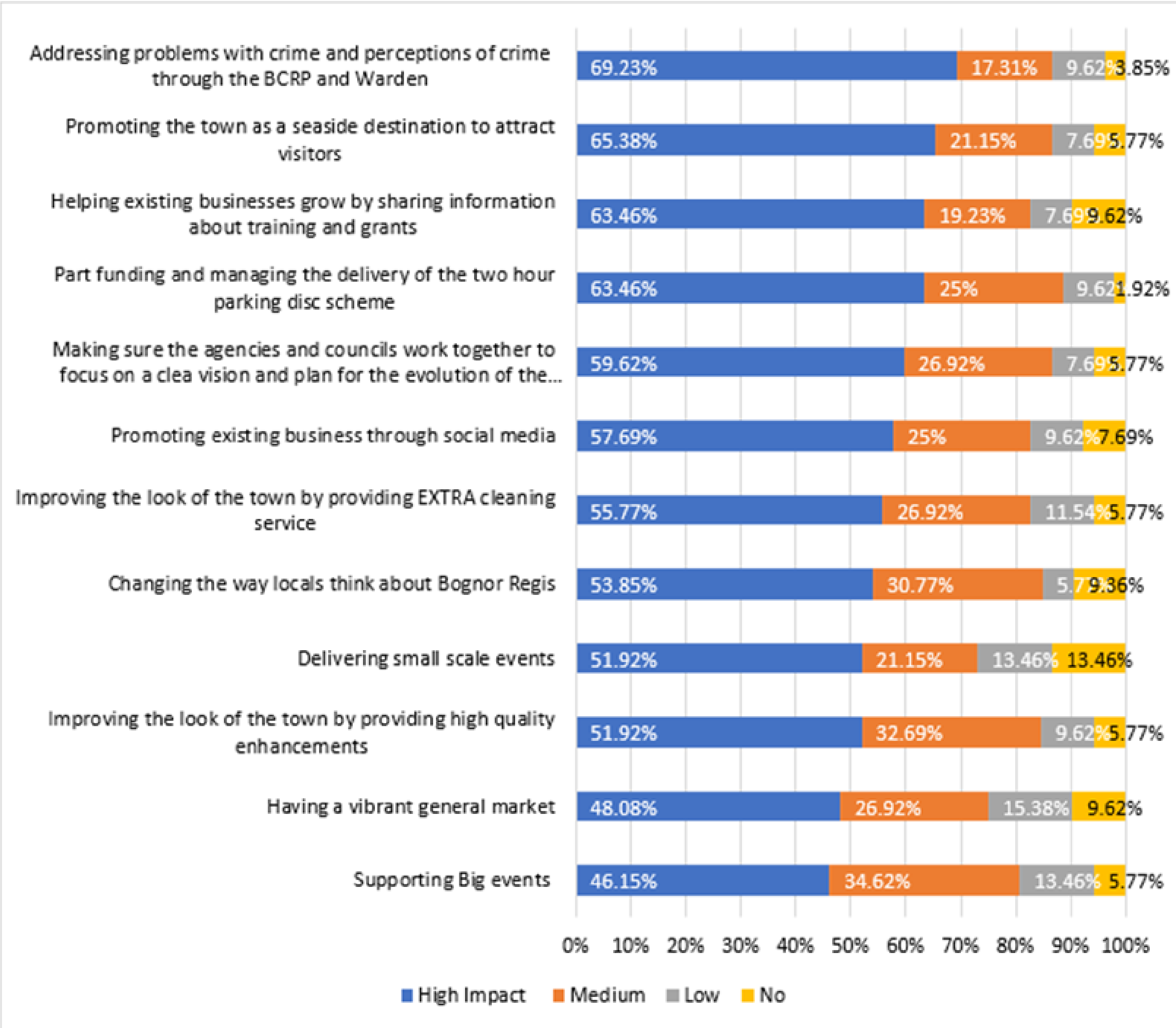
When asked where the BID should focus its activity (and investment of levy funds) over the five year period 2023-2028, 70% of respondents answering that the focus should be on the town, while 30% answered it should be on businesses and 2 % were unsure.

BR BUSINESSES: WHAT IS THE MOST IMPACTFUL ACTIVITY THE BID DELIVERS TO THE TOWN?

Responses reveal the highest impact BID activity *benefitting the town* as: efforts to reduce crime and perceptions of crime followed by the BID's promotion of Bognor Regis as a seaside destination and its funding and delivery role in maintaining provision of the Two-Hour Parking Disc scheme.

A reasonable conclusion to draw from this data is that, while the parking disc is important to supporting the TOWN, it is not the **top** priority for businesses responding to the survey.

FIGURE4. 6 THE BUSINESSES OPINION ABOUT ACTIONS THAT WOULD HAVE THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT IN TERM 2 ON THE TOWN



BR BUSINESSES: HOW SIGNIFICANT IS THE TWO-HOUR PARKING SCHEME TO THE TOWN?

At the point of survey, the scheme was charged at £2, only available via physical disc, and distributed through a network of town centre independent businesses. Drilling down into the detail of survey responses, the significance of the two-hour parking scheme to businesses – particularly independents - is evidenced.

Using a scale whereby -100 represents "no impact" and +100 represent "highest impact", analysis of the 44 responses specific to the impact of the parking scheme shows that the average score allocated by ALL businesses for benefit to town is +59, and average score for impact for their individual business is +44.

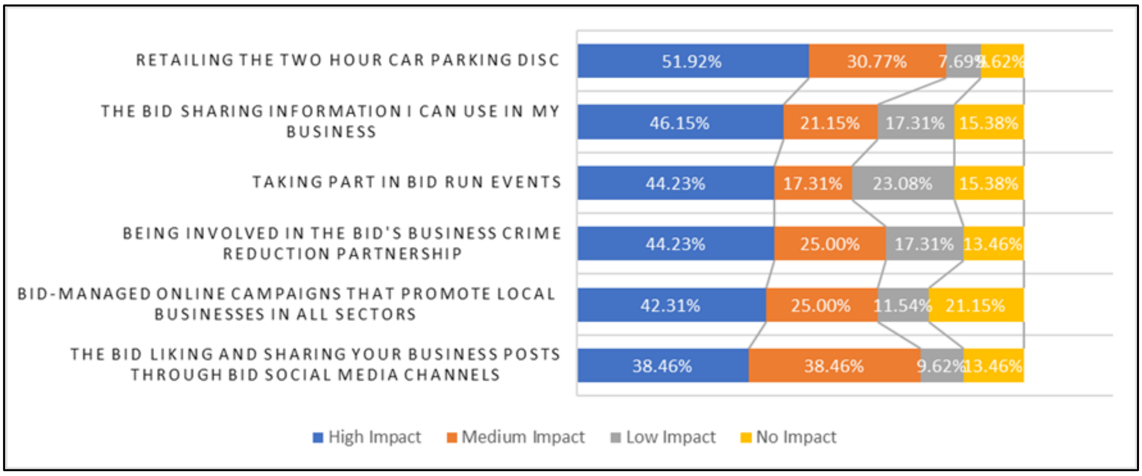
RESPONSES SORTED BY "IMPACT ON THE TOWN", LOW TO HIGH

Location	National / Indie	Sector	Disc retailer	Impact Town	Impact Business
High Street (east)	Independent	RETAIL / CIC	N	-70	-90
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	-30	30
Belmont Street	Independent	SERVICED ACCOMMODATION	N	-30	-100
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	TRANSPORT	N	-30	-20
York Road	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	0	50
High Street (east)	Independent	HEALTHCARE SERVICES	Y	10	50
Bedford Street	Independent	RETAIL	N	10	0
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	10	-100
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	BANK	N	20	50
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	20	30
Place St Maur	Independent	CONSTRUCTION	N	20	40
Richmond Road	Independent	CONSTRUCTION - RETAIL	N	20	-30
Station Road	Independent	ESTATE AGENT	N	30	40
High Street (east)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	30	40
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	RETAIL	N	30	30
Station Road	Independent	HAIR & BEAUTY SERVICES	N	40	50
Queensway	Independent	CARE SERVICES	N	50	80
Queensway	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	50	60
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	60	60
Queensway	Independent	RETAIL	Y	60	60
High Street (Core retail)	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	70	40
High Street (east)	Independent	HAIR & BEAUTY SERVICES	N	70	70
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	80	80
High Street (Old Town)	National chain	ESTATE AGENT	N	90	90
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	RETAIL	N	90	70
High Street (east)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	90	100
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	90	90
Bedford Street	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	100	20
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	ESTATE AGENT	N	100	100
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	Y	100	100
Place St Maur	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	N	100	-100
Seafront	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	N	100	30
High Street (Old Town)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	100	100
York Road	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	100	100
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
High Street (Old Town)	National chain	RETAIL	N	100	50
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	100	100
High Street (Old Town)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
Queensway	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
Place St Maur	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100
Station Road	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100
The Arcade	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100
Station Road	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	50
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	TRAVEL AGENT	N	100	50

OBSERVATION: It is interesting to note that the Two Hour Parking scheme is not globally viewed as "high impact" by all businesses.

BR BUSINESSES: HOW SIGNIFICANT IS THE TWO-HOUR PARKING SCHEME TO YOUR BUSINESS?

Survey responses in the 2022 consultation evidence that the most impactful activity the BID can deliver to directly *benefit individual businesses* is **overwhelmingly** led by retailing the multi-agency enabled Two Hour Parking Disc scheme.



The table overleaf has been sorted to show respondents' rating for impact of the two hour parking for **THEIR INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS,** from lowest to highest.

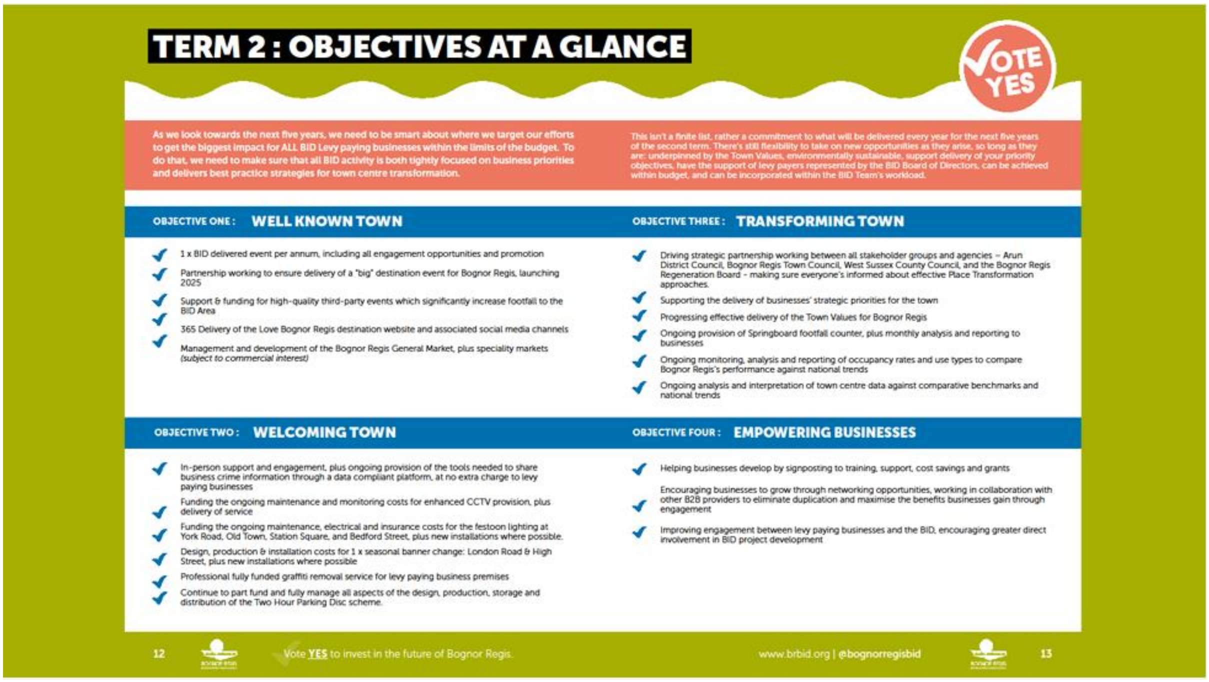
Drilling down, there is some variation between the perceived positive impact of scheme from businesses that retail the disc (highlighted in yellow), and those that don't. Average scores for the impact of the scheme from the 35 respondents that DO NOT sell the discs is +53 for the town, and +34 for individual businesses. From the 9 survey respondents that DO sell the discs, the average rating for impact on both the town and individual businesses was +82.

This evidences the importance of the two-hour parking scheme to those businesses that actively participate in its delivery, and, speculatively, the additional significance of revenue generated in what has been an especially challenging four years for bricks and mortar businesses. However, this should be balanced by one high-volume disc retailer's repeated feedback that retained profits from annual sales of discs is "pennies" once staff time in collection, storage of discs and card processing fees are taken into consideration.

RESPONSES SORTED BY “IMPACT ON YOUR BUSINESS”, LOW TO HIGH

Location	National / Indie	Sector	Disc retailer	Impact Towi	Impact Busines
Belmont Street	Independent	SERVICED ACCOMMODATION	N	-30	-100
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	10	-100
Place St Maur	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	N	100	-100
High Street (east)	Independent	RETAIL / CIC	N	-70	-90
Richmond Road	Independent	CONSTRUCTION - RETAIL	N	20	-30
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	TRANSPORT	N	-30	-20
Bedford Street	Independent	RETAIL	N	10	0
Bedford Street	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	100	20
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	-30	30
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	20	30
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	RETAIL	N	30	30
Seafront	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	N	100	30
Place St Maur	Independent	CONSTRUCTION	N	20	40
Station Road	Independent	ESTATE AGENT	N	30	40
High Street (east)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	30	40
High Street (Core retail)	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	70	40
York Road	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	0	50
High Street (east)	Independent	HEALTHCARE SERVICES	Y	10	50
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	BANK	N	20	50
Station Road	Independent	HAIR & BEAUTY SERVICES	N	40	50
High Street (Old Town)	National chain	RETAIL	N	100	50
Station Road	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	50
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	TRAVEL AGENT	N	100	50
Queensway	National chain	RETAIL - CHARITY	N	50	60
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	60	60
Queensway	Independent	RETAIL	Y	60	60
High Street (east)	Independent	HAIR & BEAUTY SERVICES	N	70	70
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	RETAIL	N	90	70
Queensway	Independent	CARE SERVICES	N	50	80
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	80	80
High Street (Old Town)	National chain	ESTATE AGENT	N	90	90
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	90	90
High Street (east)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	90	100
High Street (Core retail)	Independent	ESTATE AGENT	N	100	100
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK	Y	100	100
High Street (Old Town)	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	100	100
York Road	Independent	FOOD & DRINK - LICENCED	N	100	100
London Road (Core Retail)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
London Road (Core Retail)	National chain	RETAIL	N	100	100
High Street (Old Town)	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
Queensway	Independent	RETAIL	Y	100	100
Place St Maur	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100
Station Road	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100
The Arcade	Independent	RETAIL	N	100	100

2 HR PARKING: LINKS TO BR BID 2023-28 BUSINESS PLAN:



TERM 2 : OBJECTIVES AT A GLANCE

VOTE YES

As we look towards the next five years, we need to be smart about where we target our efforts to get the biggest impact for ALL BID Levy paying businesses within the limits of the budget. To do that, we need to make sure that all BID activity is both tightly focused on business priorities and delivers best practice strategies for town centre transformation.

This isn't a finite list, rather a commitment to what will be delivered every year for the next five years of the second term. There's still flexibility to take on new opportunities as they arise, so long as they are: underpinned by the Town Values, environmentally sustainable, support delivery of your priority objectives, have the support of levy payers represented by the BID Board of Directors, can be achieved within budget, and can be incorporated within the BID Team's workload.

OBJECTIVE ONE : WELL KNOWN TOWN

- 1 x BID delivered event per annum, including all engagement opportunities and promotion
- Partnership working to ensure delivery of a "big" destination event for Bognor Regis, launching 2025
- Support & funding for high-quality third-party events which significantly increase footfall to the BID Area
- 365 Delivery of the Love Bognor Regis destination website and associated social media channels
- Management and development of the Bognor Regis General Market, plus speciality markets *(subject to commercial interest)*

OBJECTIVE TWO : WELCOMING TOWN

- In-person support and engagement, plus ongoing provision of the tools needed to share business crime information through a data compliant platform, at no extra charge to levy paying businesses
- Funding the ongoing maintenance and monitoring costs for enhanced CCTV provision, plus delivery of service
- Funding the ongoing maintenance, electrical and insurance costs for the festoon lighting at York Road, Old Town, Station Square, and Bedford Street, plus new installations where possible.
- Design, production & installation costs for 1 x seasonal banner change: London Road & High Street, plus new installations where possible
- Professional fully funded graffiti removal service for levy paying business premises
- Continue to part fund and fully manage all aspects of the design, production, storage and distribution of the Two Hour Parking Disc scheme.

OBJECTIVE THREE : TRANSFORMING TOWN

- Driving strategic partnership working between all stakeholder groups and agencies – Arun District Council, Bognor Regis Town Council, West Sussex County Council, and the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board - making sure everyone's informed about effective Place Transformation approaches.
- Supporting the delivery of businesses' strategic priorities for the town
- Progressing effective delivery of the Town Values for Bognor Regis
- Ongoing provision of Springboard footfall counter, plus monthly analysis and reporting to businesses
- Ongoing monitoring, analysis and reporting of occupancy rates and use types to compare Bognor Regis's performance against national trends
- Ongoing analysis and interpretation of town centre data against comparative benchmarks and national trends

OBJECTIVE FOUR : EMPOWERING BUSINESSES

- Helping businesses develop by signposting to training, support, cost savings and grants
- Encouraging businesses to grow through networking opportunities, working in collaboration with other B2B providers to eliminate duplication and maximise the benefits businesses gain through engagement
- Improving engagement between levy paying businesses and the BID, encouraging greater direct involvement in BID project development

12 Vote YES to invest in the future of Bognor Regis. www.brbid.org | @bognorregisbid 13

WHAT HAS THE BID COMMITTED TO?

The BID's Term 2 Business Plan was developed following the consultation with levy paying businesses in March 2022, and a further consultation was carried out in July 2022 to make sure the draft plan accurately captured business expectations.

The 2023-28 Term 2 Business Plan reflects the majority view that the BID's activity should focus on improvements that benefit the town, rather than individual businesses. This is clearly communicated as:

> "As we look towards the next five years, we need to be smart about where we target our efforts to get the biggest impact for ALL BID Levy paying businesses within the limits of the budget. To do that, we need to make sure that all BID activity is both tightly focused on business priorities and **delivers best practice strategies for town centre transformation."**

The two-hour parking scheme is included under the Welcoming Town Objective, with a specific commitment to "continue to part fund and fully manage all aspects of the design, production, storage and distribution of the two-hour parking disc scheme." However, this commitment was contingent on the continuation of partnership arrangements with ADC and BRTC, which have already changed significantly since the publication of the Business Plan.

WHAT DO THE COMMUNITY WANT FROM THEIR TOWN CENTRE?

Evidence base: BID / University of Chichester consultation with businesses and community members, April 2021

*NB: While this survey sought the views of Bognor Regis businesses and residents on a range of issues affecting the town's appeal to **tourists**, the evidence is viable as it asks for local opinion on specific issue relating to their town centre, including parking.*

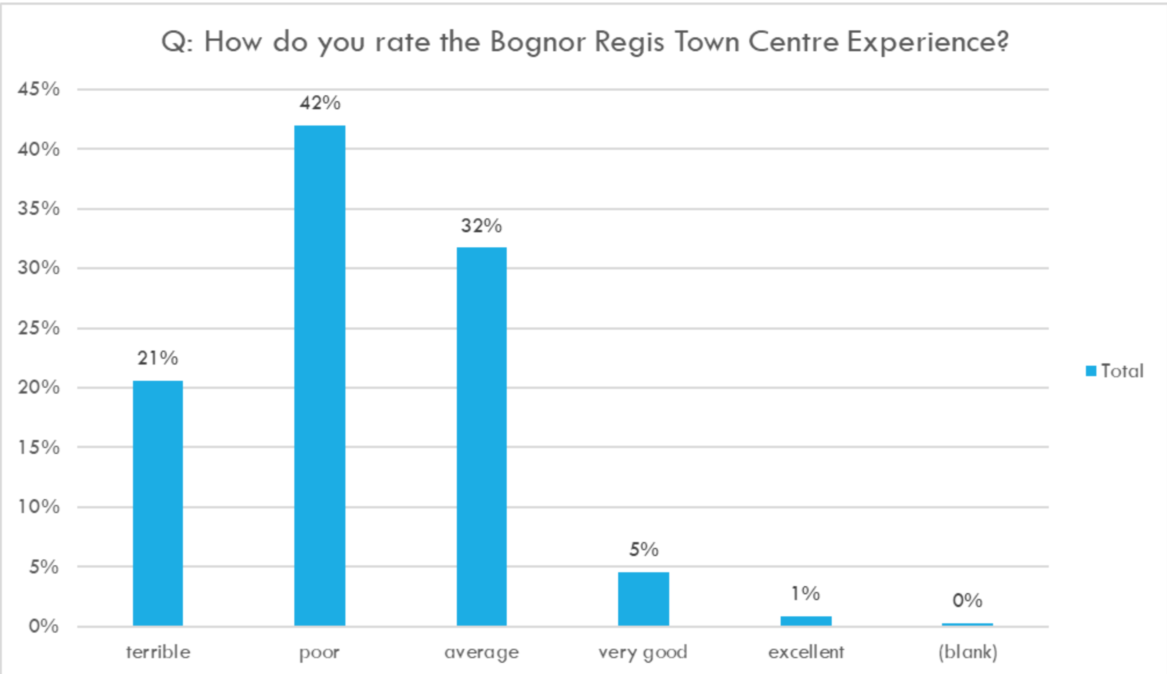
Context: It should be noted that, at the time the survey was carried out, the two hour parking scheme was operating under previous partnership arrangements, with cardboard discs charged at £2 for two hours. While the Ringo parking app was available, the survey pre-dates the facility to pay by card at all town centre car parks introduced in 2022.

- Total of 351 responses to the survey
- 298 from community representatives
- 52 from business representatives

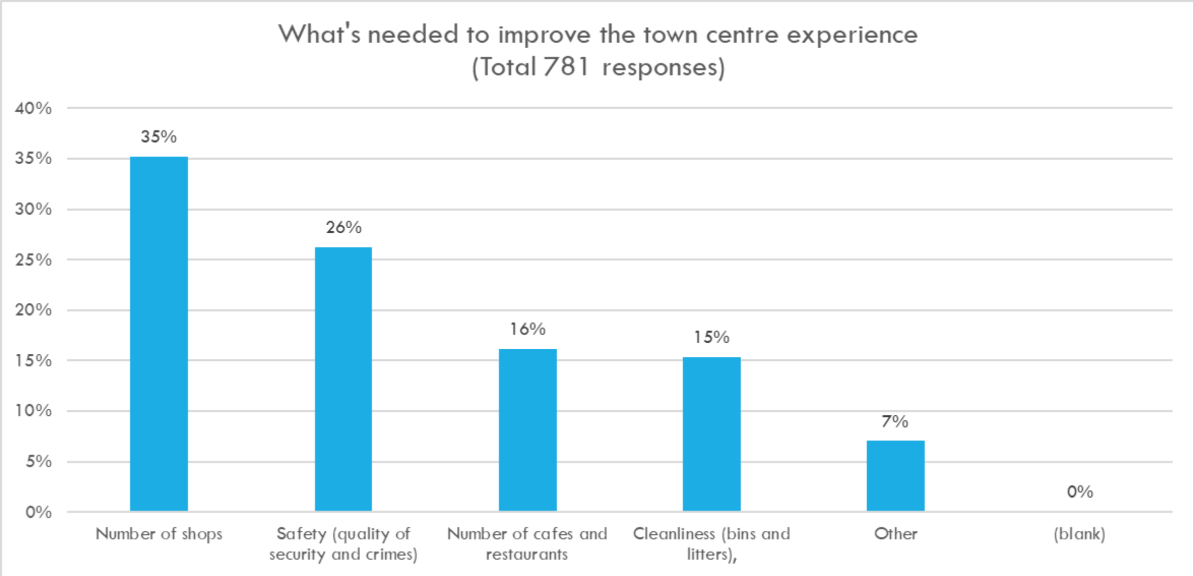
Where free text entry was possible, responses which contained multiple recommendations or observations have been broken down into their component parts and coded accordingly by Heather Allen, BR BID COO. All (anonymised) raw data is available on request for verification of results.

TC1: Question: How do you rate Bognor Regis town centre experience?

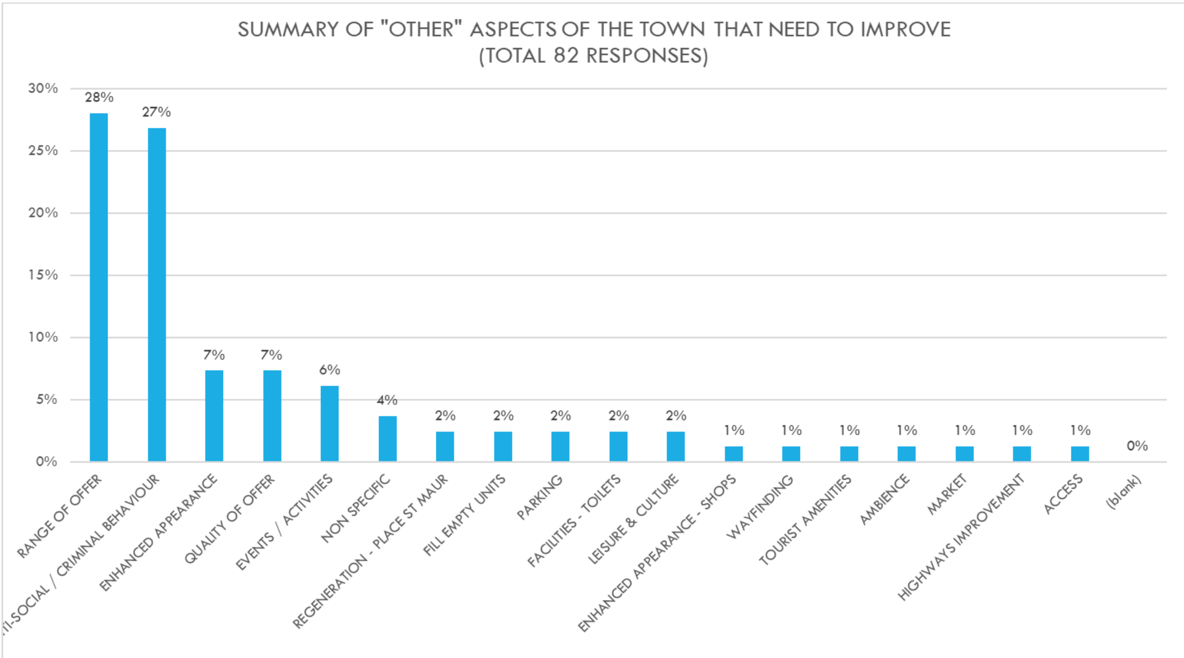
Level of satisfaction - 1. Terrible, 2. Poor, 3. Average, 4. Very Good, 5. Excellent



TC2: Question: If you selected 1, 2 or 3 on the previous question, what aspects of the town centre need to improve? **(Multiple answers available)**



TC3: Question: If you selected "Other", please specify:



Points to make

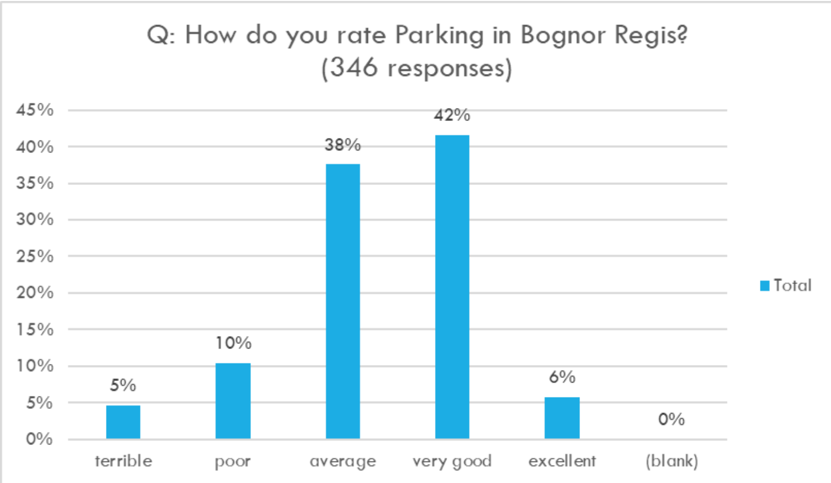
- Prominence of "Range of Offer" and "Anti-Social Behaviour" correlates with previous questions "Number of Shops" and "Safety".

(All response detail is available if Directors would like to view.)

Survey Questions specific to Parking in Bognor Regis (P)

P1: Question: How do you rate car parking in Bognor Regis?

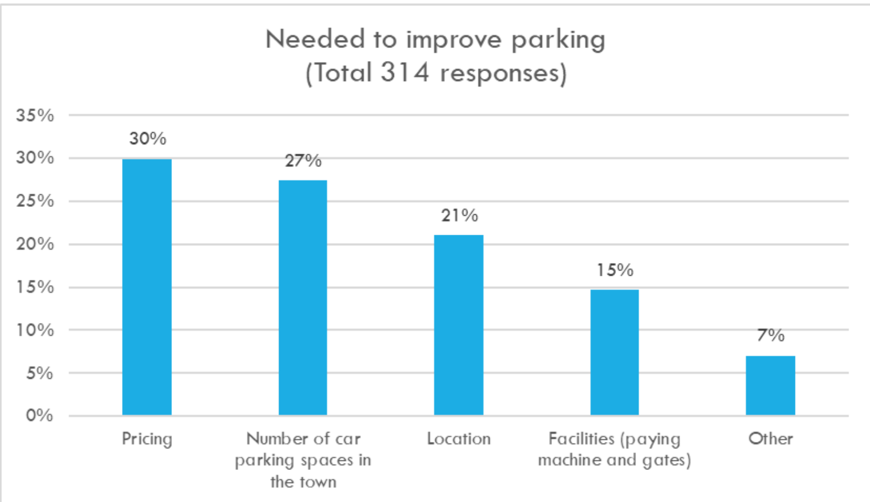
Level of satisfaction - 1. Terrible, 2. Poor, 3. Average, 4. Very Good, 5. Excellent



Points to make:

- 53% respondents rate parking as "average / below average, with 48% rating as above average ("very good" or "excellent").
- Interesting to note that this ratio is reflected in 18-50 age ranges, but dissatisfaction increases in the 51+ age ranges. Detailed analysis / raw data available on request.

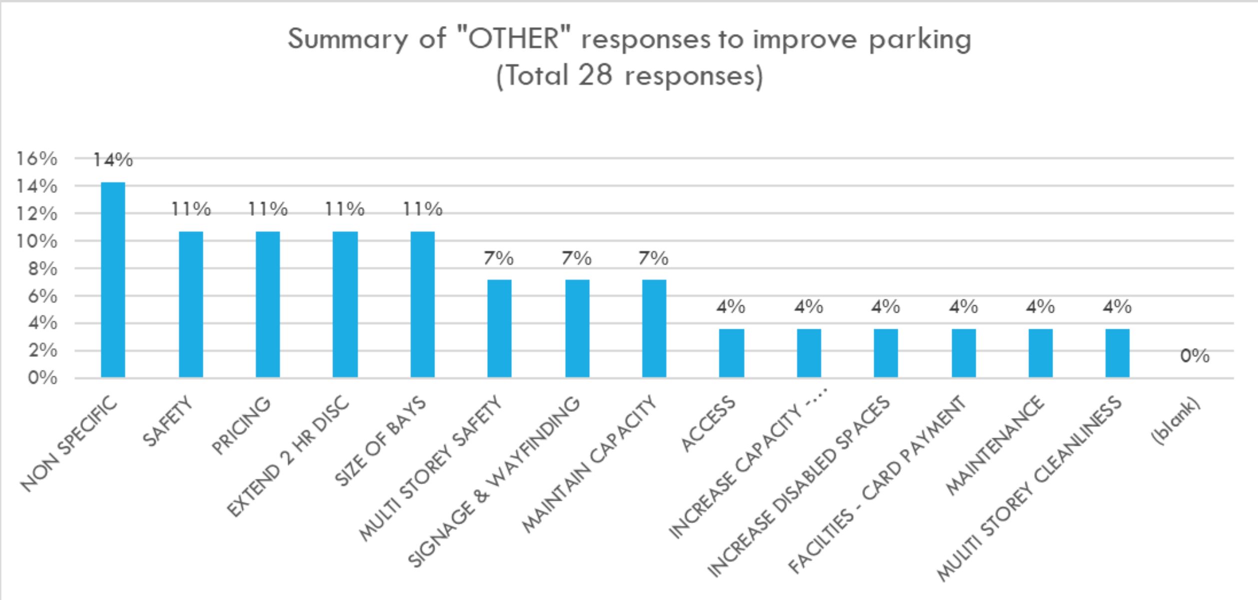
P2: Question: If you selected 1, 2 or 3 on the previous question, what are the reasons for it? (Multiple answers available)



Points to make:

- Car parking pricing referenced as a negative despite availability of £2 for two hour parking disc.

P3: Question: If you selected “Other”, please specify:



RELEVANT RESPONSE DETAIL: “OTHER” TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

Parking disc excellent, maybe 3 hours and more available places	EXTEND 2 HR DISC
The parking they do have is overpriced	PRICING
to much reliance on getting cash out of people in any way possible	PRICING
2hrs free needs to be 3hrs to be useful for families/disabled visitors.	EXTEND 2 HR DISC
All car parks should be pay on foot with first 2hrs free and free on street parking	EXTEND 2 HR DISC
Need free parking like littilhampton	EXTEND 2 HR DISC

HOW MUCH DOES THE TWO-HOUR SCHEME COST?

Free parking is never truly "free", and under the new arrangements all costs are being borne by ADC through lost income from parking spaces, offset by all retained profits from sale of discs and e-permits after print, promotion, distribution and staffing costs are taken into account.

- At the time of the first Working Party meeting on 5th February 2023, 21,000 cardboard discs were already in circulation in Bognor Regis, and a further 409 e-permits had been activated.
- In Littlehampton, 9,203 cardboard discs were in circulation, and 649 e-permits had been activated.
- There is no restriction on the number of e-permits available to download in either town.

There is no denying that determining the number of spaces being used with parking discs is nigh on impossible as, once the discs leave the retailers, there is no cost-effective or accurate way to track the frequency of disc use across all three car parks in Bognor Regis, from 8am to 6pm, 365 days of the year. The electronic permit available as an app does allow for use monitoring. However, all the time that e-permits and discs are available simultaneously, there is no cost-effective or accurate way to track if e-permit users are being used alongside physical discs, or whether people are moving their vehicle to another car park for a further two hours.

OPINION: Under the BID's delivery of the scheme from 2019 – 2023 discs, around 27,000 - 28,000 discs were sold in the course of each calendar year. Paying for discs in Bognor Regis has been established for significantly longer than Littlehampton, where the £3 charge has only just been introduced. I predict that, once established, sales for the whole of the year will reflect around 22,000 discs in circulation in Littlehampton each year.

Based on information provided by ADC Parking, and confirmed by the BID's experience of production, distribution costs and sales patterns, the current delivery method via cardboard discs, with 50,000 discs in circulation, and each disc used an average of 12 times per annum represents a cost of **over £1.2m every year** to deliver the two hour free parking scheme in LH and BR.

I have previously shared a simple spreadsheet where you can adjust the percentages you think most reflect use patterns – along the lines of what percentage of people do you think are using the discs once a year / once a week /once a month etc. I must stress that this is only modelling, based on best guesses – the true cost of the scheme via cardboard discs cannot be quantified.

Ironically, using the percentage frequency I inputted on the attached spreadsheet, which was conservatively weighted towards lower frequency use, the average came back as 12 uses per annum. On this basis, I would like to seek Directors' feedback on proposing 12 uses per annum as a reasonable usage figure for ADC Officers to base their financial forecasts for comparison. I would also like to suggest that, if there is no clear agreement on usage patterns from Working Party Members, Officers should calculate the average of the numbers fed back and use that figure. It will be important to remember that these are "best estimates" for comparison purposes, not an accurate reflection of disc use.

In my opinion, I do not think that recommending a public survey / poll to ask users about their personal disc usage will reap any more statistically accurate results than the "agreed best-estimate" approach.

CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION– STAKEHOLDER PARTNERS

Changes to scheme delivery, plus budgetary decisions made by BRTC have already resulted in a direct loss of investment in anything other than "free parking" to support footfall in the town centre.

BRBID: Transferring the scheme from BID to ADC management resulted in @£16k per annum reduction in funding the BID was able to allocate to additional provision in the town centre of Bognor Regis, such as events and visual enhancements. The consequential loss of the Ambassador post means that in-person engagement with levy paying businesses is much more difficult, particularly when the BID COO has had to assume all duties and responsibilities of that role on top of her own.

A NOTE ON UKSPF: Successful applications to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund are enabling the BID Team to fund delivery of key projects in the town from 2023-2025. It is a sobering fact that, in light of partners' financial constraints, once the UKSPF comes to an end (31st March 2025), there is no current information as to what – if anything - may follow. Without access to additional external funding, once Business Crime Reduction costs and fixed commitments are honoured, all other BID activity will be reliant on the broad skillset of the 1.5 Team Members delivering everything in-house from 1st April 2025.

ADC: Recent budget drafts presented to ADC's Economy Committee suggest that the need for financial restraint will lead to the loss of an established senior post in The Economy Team, plus scaling back of the Tourism Officer post – at a time when Councillors have recently approved implementation of the ADC Tourism Strategy. Promoting Bognor Regis as a Visitor Destination was ranked by businesses as the second most impactful intervention for the town. Significant cuts of £50k have been proposed to ADC's Events Management budget. Having made enquiries, there is no ADC grant funding available for third parties to apply for to deliver town centre activations.

BRTC: Budget decisions made by Bognor Regis Town Council for 2024-25 have led to the loss of two staff posts, including the Project Officer – a key delivery role. A separate decision will lead to the reversion to 40 hours (5/7 days per wk) of business support from the from the Community Warden from 1st April, and BRTC declined any financial support towards a district-wide BCRP. This weakens any argument BRTC might put forward about supporting businesses through the parking scheme, as Reducing Crime and ASB was ranked by businesses as the **most** impactful intervention for the town. While a £6k allocation has been ringfenced for "Town centre events" delivered by the BRTC Events Officer, other funding support for third parties to support community events, seafront lighting and other activations has been curtailed.

In light of this: As much as businesses and the community appreciate the free parking scheme, and will naturally want to retain it, **the BID must seriously question whether - if free parking is the ONLY funding source being invested to support town centre footfall , is it the BEST investment to achieve that outcome?** To do that, the BID needs to lobby to make sure that ALL options are on the table. Based on the first working party meeting, it seems that it's a choice between what one side can't afford, and what the other doesn't want, i.e.: continuation of the scheme as is, versus provision through an app.

In the final report shared with ADC's Environment Committee in September 2023, the Group Head of Technical Services outlined the alternatives that had been considered in 2023, reproduced below:

1. **Discontinue the 2-hour free parking scheme altogether.**

   This would be financially advantageous to Arun District Council as additional revenue would be generated from the car parks within both town centres. However, Arun District Council currently have no quantifiable data on usage nor therefore on how this could affect footfall into the town centres. In any case parking charges are not intended to raise revenue and therefore this consideration carries less weight.

2. **Increasing partner contributions significantly.**

   Increasing the partner contributions significantly would have a negative impact on their ability to provide other services and may result in the partners pulling out of the scheme altogether, as it becomes unaffordable.

3. **Increasing the disc/ permit price significantly.**

   There is scope to increase the annual fee significantly and yet continue to represent excellent value for customers. Increasing the initial cost may adversely affect take up of the schemes which has the potential to reduce footfall into the town centres, but as Arun District Council currently have no quantifiable data on the usage it is not known to what extent.

4. **Reducing the period of time parking is free from 2 hours to 1 hour.**

   Reducing the free parking time from 2 hours to 1hour, may discourage uptake of the scheme and impact negatively on footfall by reducing the period of time scheme participants spend in the town centres. 1 hour would often not be sufficient for customers to get into the town centre and utilise the local amenities and businesses before needing to return to their vehicle to pay for additional parking.

5. **Reducing the number of car parks within the scheme from 3 to 1 in both Littlehampton and Bognor Regis.**

   By removing two of the participating car parks from each scheme, this would significantly reduce the number of spaces available to scheme participants in the town centre. This would have a particularly detrimental impact to participants during the summer months, when demand for parking in the town centre is higher,

6. **To continue the 2-hour free parking scheme in its current format.**

   Continuing the 2-hour free parking schemes in their current format would continue to provide difficulties with enforcement and would not eradicate misuse of the schemes. Quantifiable data on usage and the benefit the schemes have on town centre footfall would remain unobtainable. The absence of usage data and foregone revenue information would make it impossible for Arun District Council to make fully informed decisions regarding the schemes, or to promote its inferred contribution to supporting footfall in the town centre. One of the partners cannot commit to fulfil their financial obligations under the current scheme.

7. **Scratch cards**

   Single-use scratch cards (where the date and time of parking are scratched off a card) reduce abuse, and provide more usage data than discs, but not as much as a virtual permit scheme. A scratch card scheme has significantly higher financial costs and environmental impacts that a virtual or cardboard disc scheme.

8. **To move to a virtual permit system (only) on 1st January 2024**

This is considered to be consistent with the Council's equalities duties. However, some more elderly and vulnerable drivers may appreciate the additional option of a cardboard disc during for 2024 as a transitional arrangement.

Having considered the above alternative options, with the exception of option 8, none of the above would prevent the misuse of the schemes by customers, provide accurate data on the usage of the schemes and would likely have a detrimental impact on either customer, businesses, Arun District Council partners or the environment. None of the above options would prevent the misuse of the schemes by customers. Option 8 is the only option which immediately eradicates misuse, reduces environmental impact, and gathers usage and financial data without impinging on the effectiveness of the scheme as a tool for supporting town centre footfall. The recommended option achieves all these benefits after the first transition year.

OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES TO PHYSICAL DISCS

The BID's February 2024 letter to the Working Party asks **members** to agree baseline figures for disc circulation and annual usage frequency for officers to use when calculating costs for various options. The BID then asks **officers** to explore a range of scenarios - some that retain the "two hour free parking" principles, and some that seek to evolve from the existing model - using those baseline figures.

A number of the BID's suggestions replicate the alternatives options presented to Environment Committee in September 23 (1,2,3, 6 and 8 above), but with financial context added through modelling based on agreed circulation and annual usage figures. Other options suggested are new, such as costings for installation of pay on exit machines, the use of ANPR, and potential move from "free" parking to "incentivised" parking, plus the idea of ringfencing funds for town centre footfall-increasing activity.

The ideal is to have a range of options on the table that can be compared systematically and objectively, outside of emotional responses to perceived "loss". Only when those costings have been presented objectively and properly scrutinised can the Working Party start making informed recommendations to the Environment Committee.

"WHAT IF" HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

What if, for example, using consistent baseline figures for all options, it is shown that partner contributions must equal £50k for the cardboard scheme to continue? Would our businesses rather divert levy and staff resources from the warden, crime reporting tools or tourism activity, to retain the parking? Would the Town Councils, where Elected Members have previously voted AGAINST contributions less than £30k towards the scheme, be prepared to divert resources from other budget areas?

What if, for example, the only economically viable way to secure the two hour **free** parking provision is through an app? Would people rather retain that scheme, or take an open-minded look at alternatives that could offset the "loss" to businesses, such as a fully funded, professional, marketing campaign, even if it meant the community paying more to park?

What if, for example, moving to either a low cost for 2 or 3 hours or ending "free" parking in its entirety led to a ringfenced, annual funding pot that could be accessed for town centre footfall-attracting activity like community events, art trails, installations, lower weighted (or no) match funding for shopfront improvements? Would those improvements be preferable to the provision of free parking via an app?

HOW MUCH BARGAINING POWER DO PARTNERS ACTUALLY HAVE?

Under the new arrangements, the BID no longer has any *financial* skin in this game. The decision by both Bognor Regis and Littlehampton town councils to withdraw from any partnership funding arrangements means they have no financial skin in the game, either. The entire cost of the scheme is now being funded by ADC.

As the two town councils' decisions led to a direct price increase for users, they have effectively weakened any challenge they could have put forward about the cost of living crisis. It's also important to remember that the BID / BRTC proposal we put forward in October 2022 also involved a price increase to £3….on the basis of the BID's understanding that the income generated could be invested in town centre footfall-improvement activity.

WHAT ARGUMENTS COULD BE MADE TO SUPPORT THE RETENTION OF PHYSICAL DISCS?

It is important to restate: **ADC are not proposing an end to two hour parking provision**. Working Party Members are being asked to consider "what comes next" in terms of *how* it is provided.

In the September 2023 report to Environment Committee, the Group Head of Technical Services countered all the arguments put forward by the BID to retain physical discs distributed through a network of businesses in its formal response. In my opinion, to raise the same objections again would be a poor use of time and resources.

BID ARGUMENTS FOR RETAINING DISCS / ADC PARKING RESPONSE

1. **Businesses benefit from having people enter their businesses to purchase the discs.**

   This benefit is limited to an annual purchase. (*NB: That's not quite the full picture, but noted)*

2. **Digital exclusion**

Those without smart phones can still purchase a virtual permit and activate it by any phone. The virtual permit system is already being used successfully for other on-street and off-street car parks in the district. Staff will be available to assist customers at Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre.

3. **Restricted locations and hours for purchasing permits.**

The virtual permits can be purchased 24/7 from any location with internet access which is wider than the trading hours of existing disc retailers. In the transition year cardboard discs will be available Mon-Fri 0900-1600 with the exception of Wednesday which is open from 1100 from centrally located Bognor Regis Town Hall and Arun Civic Centre.

4. **Cash cannot be used to purchase the annual permit**

Permits can be purchased by drivers with credit/debit cards / bank accounts. Cash can continue to be used to purchase standard priced parking tickets from all Arun's pay and display car parks. Cash purchases account for a decreasing proportion of car parking ticket purchases with customers increasingly preferring the convenience of App and contactless payment methods.

5. **The businesses retailing discs would no longer receive income for services rendered in the retail of discs.**

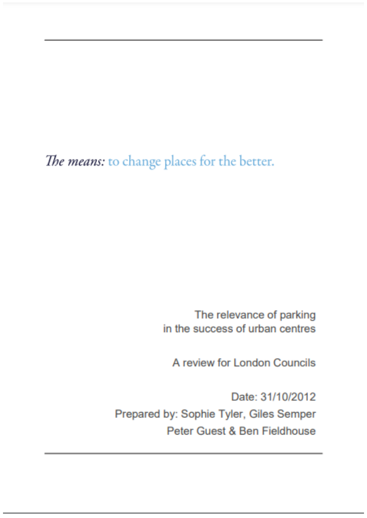
The purpose of the 2 hour parking scheme is to support town centre footfall, not to generate surplus revenues for partners from Arun's foregone car park revenue.

HOW BIG A ROLE DOES PARKING PLAY IN SUPPORTING TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL?

The level of investment ADC are making in terms of free parking must then raise the question about the correlation between free parking and town centre footfall, AKA town centre vitality and viability. How significant is parking or free parking in people's decisions as to whether or not to visit a town centre? To what extent can the benefits be evidenced?

To try to pin down an answer, I have consulted numerous formal research papers, studies, articles and opinion pieces. All research is referenced and summarised in appendices for your information. Unfortunately, it is not straightforward.

I'm not going to make comment, simply present summaries of the documents here, with links to the full documents if you'd like to explore further. One observation though – I am not an expert on parking, and I have found and read these studies, reports and findings. Officers from ADC Parking ARE parking experts. They will have studied these reports too. And be far more familiar with them than I am.


The means: to change places for the better.

The relevance of parking
in the success of urban centres

A review for London Councils

Date: 31/10/2012
Prepared by: Sophie Tyler, Giles Semper
Peter Guest & Ben Fieldhouse

THE RELEVANCE OF PARKING IN THE SUCCESS OF URBAN CENTRES A REVIEW FOR LONDON COUNCILS

OCTOBER 2012

PREPARED BY: SOPHIE TYLER, GILES SEMPER PETER GUEST & BEN FIELDHOUSE

REPORT SOURCE: https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/download/file/fid/4133

REPORT SUMMARY: This report suggests that the provision of free parking* is not a simple or effective way to improve the vitality and viability of town centres. Some of the main points are:

- Free parking is not really free, as someone has to pay for the development and maintenance of parking spaces, either through taxes or higher prices of goods and services.
- Free parking does not necessarily increase the number of visitors or shoppers to a town centre, as it may reduce the turnover of spaces and benefit mainly local workers or long-stay parkers.
- Free parking may have negative impacts on the environment, traffic congestion, public transport use, and the quality and diversity of the town centre offer.
- The availability and cost of parking is only one of many factors that influence the attractiveness of a town centre, and often not the most important one. Other factors include the mix and quality of shops and services, the accessibility by other modes, the physical environment, and the safety and security of the area.
- A well-managed parking scheme, where charges are set according to demand and the availability of alternatives, can help to balance the needs of different users and support the local economy.

**The reference is to "unlimited" free parking.*

RELEVANT EXTRACT REPRODUCED IN FULL: KEY FINDINGS:

The review of the academic literature and other reports showed that there was relatively little research carried out into the link between parking and urban centre success. Where there was research, it was often not backed up by survey data or other robust evidence. However, where there *was* research, the main findings were as follows:

• More parking does not necessarily mean greater commercial success. A well-managed parking scheme, where spaces 'turn over' frequently can help to increase the number of visitors coming to a town centre and thereby help business.

• There is no such thing as 'free' parking. The costs of developing and maintaining parking spaces and then enforcing proper use to ensure good traffic flow must be borne by somebody. In the case of local authority operated parking (on street or off street) any costs that are not covered by parking revenue falls to local Council Tax payers.

• Shopkeepers consistently overestimate the share of their customers coming by car. In some cases, this is by a factor of as much as 400%. In London, as well as other cities, the share of those accessing urban centres on foot or by public transport is much greater. Walking is the most important mode for accessing local town centres; public transport is the most important mode for travel to international centres, such as Oxford Street.

• Car drivers spend more on a single trip; walkers and bus users spend more over a week or a month. In 2011, in London town centres, walkers spent £147 more per month than those travelling by car. Compared with 2004, spending by public transport users and walkers has risen; spending by car users and cyclists has decreased.

• A good mix of shops and services and a quality environment are some of the most important factors in attracting visitors to town centres. If both these are poor, then changes to parking or accessibility are very unlikely to make a town centre more attractive.

• There is very little evidence of the impacts of parking on the night time economy. This is an area that needs more research.

• Boroughs collect a lot of data on parking but there is less information available on town centre economic factors. Finding ways to coordinate data collection across departments could be helpful to monitor the impacts of parking policies

FREE CAR PARKING NOT GOOD FOR HIGH STREETS

OCTOBER 2014

SUSTRANS

ARTICLE SOURCE: *Free car parking not good for high streets - Sustrans.org.uk*

ARTICLE SUMMARY: The Sustrans article suggests that:

- Free parking* is **not** a good solution for revitalising high streets, as it does not guarantee greater commercial success and shifts the costs elsewhere.
- Free parking can hurt high streets by attracting people who park there all day and prevent retail customers from finding a space.
- High streets need to put **people**, rather than cars, at the heart of their design, and make them more attractive for walking and cycling, which can boost trade and reduce traffic.

**Again – the article is referring to a "blanket" approach to free parking*

RELEVANT EXTRACTS REPORTED IN FULL:

"In fact, much of the evidence suggests that it is people, rather than cars, we need to put at the heart of our high street.

A London Councils report has shown that more and cheaper parking does not guarantee greater commercial success and offering parking for 'free' actually means the costs fall elsewhere, usually on the local council.

Shop owners, many of whom lead the charge for free parking, regularly overestimate the number of their customers arriving by car. Our own work in Bristol highlighted how shop owners overestimated the importance of car-borne trade by 100%.

This is backed up by the London Councils report, which evidences that pedestrians and cyclists return more often to high street shops and spend more money over time than customers arriving by car. Living Streets recent 'Pedestrian Pound' report concluded that making places better for walking could boost trade by 40%. "

RETHINK PARKING

2013

THE ASSOCIATION OF TOWN & CITY MANAGEMENT (ATCM), THE BRITISH PARKING ASSOCIATION (BPA), SPRINGBOARD RESEARCH LTD AND PARKING DATA & RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL (PDRI)

SOURCE DOCUMENT:
www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/Library/Reports%20and%20research/BPA_UK_Parking_Sector_Report_AWweb.pdf

REPORT SUMMARY

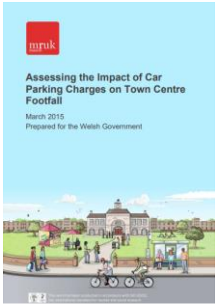
The report's aim: To explore the relationship between car parking provision and town centre prosperity, and to provide guidance on better parking management for local authorities and private operators.

Findings: The report finds that there is no clear link between car parking charges and the amenities on offer in a location, and that some mid-range and smaller centres charge more than the national average, which may affect their footfall and viability. The report also finds that parking operators provide parking spaces that match the footfall levels of their location, and that parking management can be used to moderate demand, encourage shifts to other modes of transport, and reinvest in car park quality and safety.

Recommendations: The report recommends that local authorities and private operators develop a plan for parking provision that answers the question "What and who is our parking for?" and that complements a wider strategy for accessibility and transport. The report also suggested a checklist and a good practice guide for better parking management, and some case studies of innovative parking schemes.

References: The report cites various sources of data and research on car parking, town centre performance, and transport policy, such as the Department for Transport, the RAC Foundation, Springboard, PDRI, Javelin, GENECON, and others.

The report does not mention "free parking" explicitly, but does imply that free parking is not a universal solution for town centre regeneration, and that it carries an opportunity cost for other uses of space and resources. The report also states that "there is no simple formula that can be given on determining the right kind of tariff to be introduced nationally because every location is exposed to an individual set of dynamics and factors."



ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CAR PARKING CHARGES ON TOWN CENTRE FOOFALL

2015

MRUK

REPORT SOURCE: *www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2018-12/150610-assessing-impact-car-parking-charges-town-centre-footfall-en.pdf*

REPORT SUMMARY:

- **Background and objectives**: The report was commissioned by the Welsh Government to examine the relationships between car parking charges and town centre footfall in Wales. It aims to review the existing literature, identify best practices, and provide recommendations on how to use car parking charges to influence town centre vitality.
- **Methodology**: The report uses a mixed methodology of literature review, stakeholder interviews, and in-street surveys in five key towns across Wales: Llanelli, Newport, Ruthin, Llangefni, and Aberystwyth. These towns were chosen for their different sizes, locations, and retail offerings.
- **Key findings**: The report finds that car parking charges are a complex and contentious issue, and that they are only one of many factors influencing town centre footfall and revenue. It finds that there is little robust evidence linking changes in car parking charges to changes in town centre vitality, and that most of the available evidence is anecdotal or based on views rather than data. It also finds that different towns have different needs and challenges, and that a one size fits all approach to parking strategy is unlikely to work across Wales.
- **Recommendations**: The report recommends that car parking charges should not be viewed in isolation from other aspects of town centre transport and retail, and that a systemic and integrated approach should be taken to future research and planning. It also recommends that Local Authorities should consider the impacts of car parking charges in the broadest possible sense, and engage with key stakeholders when changing their car park charges. It suggests that the Welsh Government should work closely with Local Authorities and business groups to develop parking strategies that take into account local nuances, protect sustainable revenue income, and promote the retail offer in town centres.

The report references examples of Local Authorities that introduced or withdrew free parking schemes in their town centres, such as Newport, Flintshire, and Swansea. However, the report does not provide any conclusive evidence on the impact of these schemes on footfall or revenue.

RELEVANT EXTRACT REPRODUCED IN FULL:

"Visitors to town centres suggested that car park charges impact on how long they to remain in the centre and, consequently, how much they spend whilst there. However, the general availability of spaces is felt by visitors to be more important than cost in their overall decision about visiting. Traffic flow and parking signage are felt by visitors to have the same, if not greater, effect on their decision to visit the town centre, how long they spend there, and how much money they spend."

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DISCUSSES FREE CAR PARKING CHANGES

AUGUST 2023

SOUTH WALES GUARDIAN

ARTICLE SOURCE: https://www.southwalesguardian.co.uk/news/23700632.carmarthenshire-county-council-discusses-free-car-parking-changes/

ARTICLE SUMMARY:

- **Free parking scheme:** The article discusses the changes to the free parking scheme in Carmarthenshire, which was funded by the Welsh Government until 2022. The scheme offered free parking between set times on set days in the main towns in the county, as well as five free parking days for events.
- **Budget pressure:** The article reports that the council is facing a budget shortfall of around £730,000 due to the reduction in income from car parking, which has been partially mitigated by a reduction in maintenance spend and an increase in income from mobile on-street parking offences. The article also states that the condition of the parking stock will deteriorate without adequate revenue, which would not promote a positive experience to visitors.
- **Options:** The article presents five options that the council is considering to address the issue, ranging from retaining the five free parking days for events and introducing one-hour free parking, to reinstating standard charging and removing all free parking offers. The article also mentions the views of different councillors on the options, highlighting the factors of cost-of-living crisis, travel behaviour, town centre economy, and public transport.
- **References:** The article contains many references to the council's report, cabinet, and scrutiny committee, as well as the RAC research on motorists' priorities.

The article implies that free parking is not a major factor in influencing consumer behaviour or town centre vitality:

- "free parking status does not seem to be having a material impact on consumer behaviour."
- "principal towns haven't seen that increase [in in-person shopping], and the fact that car parking charges – which would be around £44 per year – are low down on motorists' priorities"
- "parking is not the key and that what is on offer is key to people going into town."

HSTF: VITAL AND VIABLE FACTORS: PARKING

AUGUST 2023

HIGH STREETS TASK FORCE

SOURCE DOCUMENT: ***Car Parking - 237 'Vital and Viable' Factors | Resources | High Street Task Force (highstreetstaskforce.org.uk)***

RELEVANT EXTRACTS: To meet the needs of their catchment communities high streets and town centre have to be both *vital* (full of reasons for people to visit) and *viable* (attractive to both visitors and investors in the longer term).

The High Street Task Force and Institute of Place Management have identified 237 factors that influence the success of our high streets. These 237 factors have then been ranked in terms of how much *influence* each factor has on the vitality and viability of town centres/high streets? (what matters) and how much local *control* there is over each factor. In essence, what matters, and what can you do about it? Calculating a score for each factor has enabled the High Streets Task Force to identify the Top 25 Priorities that local place leaders and place leaders should be focusing on, in their quest for vitality and viability and to have sustainable high streets that meet the needs of their catchment communities. The top 25 factors are detailed in the table below.

Parking is included within NECESSITIES, ranked as priority 7. In a linked HSTF document, the parking factor is defined as:

> "The number or availability of parking spaces in the town centre, High Street, shopping centre, retail park, etc. It also relates to parking costs, maximum parking duration, the location of parking spaces, and the diversity of parking supply (van der Waerden et al, 1998). The provision of 'easy', 'plenty', and 'inexpensive parking' has been numerously mentioned by respondents as a factor for high street patronage (Bell, 1999), as well as giving the perception of better quality of service (DeNisco and Warnaby, 2013). Research suggests that the location of the car parking facilities have an impact on where people choose to shop as consumers are more likely to visit stores in the close vicinity of where they parked (van der Waerden et al, 1998). Pricing policies need to be carefully implemented as there is high sensitivity to increases or decreases in tariffs, and any increase must correspond to the attractiveness and quality of the area."

Guidance on the 25 Vital and Viable Priorities Table (over):

- Priorities nearer to the top of the table have a higher score. However, this does not necessarily mean all towns/high streets need to focus on ACTIVITY before they tackle INNOVATION. Rather, these 25 Priorities are a framework by which place leaders can assess the current performance of their high street/town centre. The results will enable them to diagnose which priorities are likely to have the most impact – and then act through making an appropriate intervention. It is then important to evaluate, to know if interventions work (or not).
- Priorities in CAPITALS represent more than one factor.
- Those in lower case represent a single factor.
- Priorities marked with an Asterix were new or amended for 2019. ACTIVITY now includes footfall as it is important to measure activity on the street, not just consider when the business and other services are open. ANCHORS now refer to universities, hospitals, anything that is attracting a significant amount of people to a location – not just anchor stores.

VITAL & VIABLE PRIORITY	COMPONENT FACTORS
1. **ACTIVITY***	*Opening hours; footfall; shopping hours; evening economy*
2. **RETAIL OFFER**	*Retailer offer; retailer representation.*
3. **VISION & STRATEGY**	*Leadership; collaboration; area development strategies*
4. **EXPERIENCE**	*Centre image; service quality; visitor satisfaction; familiarity; atmosphere*
5. **APPEARANCE**	*Visual appearance; cleanliness; ground floor frontages*
6. **PLACE MANAGEMENT**	*Centre management; shopping centre management; Town Centre Management (TCM); place management; Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)*
7. **NECESSITIES**	*Car-parking; amenities; general facilities*
8. **Anchors***	*Presence of anchors - which give locations their basic character and signify importance*
9. **NON-RETAIL OFFER**	*Attractions; entertainment; non-retail offer; leisure offer*
10. **MERCHANDISE**	*Range/Quality of goods; assortments; merchandising*
11. **WALKING**	*Walkability; pedestrianisation/flow; cross-shopping; linked trips; connectivity*
12. **PLACE MARKETING**	*Centre marketing; marketing; orientation/flow*
13. **NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS**	*Networking; partnerships; community leadership; retail/tenant trust; tenant/manager relations; strategic alliances; centre empowerment; stakeholder power; engagement*
14. **ACCESSIBLE**	*Convenience; accessibility*
15. **DIVERSITY**	*Range/quality of shops; tenant mix; tenant variety; availability of alternative formats; store characteristics; comparison/convenience; chain vs independent; supermarket impact; retail diversity; retail choice*
16. **ATTRACTIVENESS**	*Sales/turnover; place attractiveness; vacancy rates; attractiveness; retail spend; customer/catchment views; Construction of out-of-town centre*
17. **MARKETS***	*Traditional markets; street trading*
18. **RECREATIONAL SPACE**	*Recreational areas; public space; open space*
19. **BARRIERS TO ENTRY**	*Barriers to entry; landlords*
20. **Safety/Crime**	*A centre KPI measuring perceptions or actual crime including shoplifting.*
21. **ADAPTABILITY**	*Retail flexibility; retail fragmentation; flexibility; store/centre design; retail unit size; store development; rents turnover*
22. **LIVEABLE**	*Multi/mono-functional; liveability; personal services; mixed use*
23. **REDEVELOPMENT PLANS***	*Planning blight; regeneration*
24. **Functionality***	*The degree to which a centre fulfils a role – e.g. service centre, employment centre, residential centre, tourist centre.*
25. **INNOVATION***	*Opportunities to experiment; retail Innovation*

WHAT'S WORKING? RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE FOR TOWN CENTRE TRANSFORMATION

THE GRIMSEY REVIEW (1)

2013

BILL GRIMSEY

REPORT SOURCE: *GrimseyReviewD1.indd (vanishinghighstreet.com)*

REPORT SUMMARY: The Grimsey Review, published in 2013, provides essential insights for revitalising high streets and town centres. The following key recommendations (excluding calls for Government Action) aim to strike a balance between parking accessibility, affordability, and the overall vitality of high streets and town centres.:

High Streets as Multifunctional Hubs:

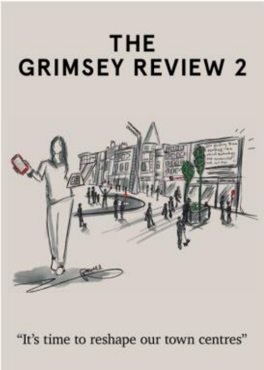
- Owing to wider structural pressures such as out-of-town and multi-channel retailing, the rise in online shopping, and a growing tech-savvy consumer, the authors stress that high streets and town centres should move beyond an over-reliance on retail.
- The concept of a "networked" high street becomes important. This involves increasing mutual connections between various nodes or network participants, including retail, services, local government, job centres, and others. The more mutual connections, the more adaptive the high street network becomes.
- The high street should be (re)imagined as a networked community hub, incorporating health, housing, education, arts, entertainment, business/office space, manufacturing, leisure, and retail.

Nominal Maximum Charge for Parking:

- The review suggests creating a maximum charge of £1 for the first two hours of parking in town centres. Additionally, it recommends introducing 30 minutes of free parking in high streets without the option to extend paid parking. This approach aims to encourage footfall and make parking more accessible to visitors 1.

Designing Places for People, Not Cars:

- Building on the recommendations, the report emphasizes the need to prioritize people over cars when designing public spaces. High streets and town centres should focus on creating attractive and accessible public realms, appreciating the benefits of open spaces beyond car-centric design 2.



THE GRIMSEY REVIEW 2

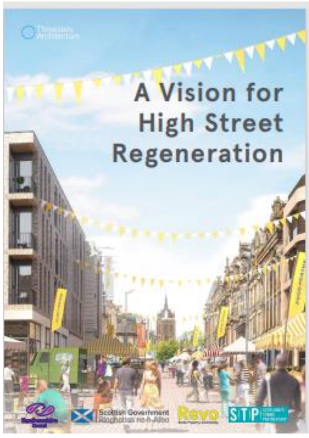
2018

BILL GRIMSEY

REPORT SOURCE: *https://great-british-high-street.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/website-assets/pdf/GrimseyReview2.pdf*

REPORT SUMMARY The Grimsey Review 2, published in 2018, offers valuable insights for transforming high streets and town centres. The key recommendations aim to enhance vitality, viability, and footfall in our town centres and high streets.

1. **Transforming Places into Community Hubs:**
   - High streets and town centres should evolve beyond mere shopping destinations. They should become multi-functional community hubs that cater to various needs. These hubs can incorporate health services, entertainment, education, leisure, business spaces, and shops. The goal is to create gathering points for whole communities that offer a great experience facilitated by technology.
2. **Strong Leadership and Vision:**
   - Local authorities and place leaders must collaboratively create long-term visions for high streets and town centres. These visions should consider not only economic aspects but also the social benefits of these spaces. Strong place leadership is crucial to coordinate visioning and drive change. Without fresh thinking and ambitious initiatives, communities may suffer, and our national character could be compromised.
3. **Place Distinction and Unique Heritage:**
   - High streets and town centres should establish their distinctive identity and celebrate their unique heritage. This involves preserving historical elements, promoting local culture, and emphasizing what makes each place special.
4. **Support from an Independent Body:**
   - The report highlights the need for support from an independent organization to drive transformation. Such an entity can provide guidance, resources, and coordination to ensure successful revitalisation efforts. Additionally, the Grimsey Review 2 identifies several barriers to future transformation, including an outdated business rates system, complex local government structures, and financing challenges



A VISION FOR HIGH STREET REGENERATION

OCTOBER 2019

RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, REVO, SCOTLAND'S TOWN PARTNERSHIPS.

REPORT SOURCE: *A-Vision-For-High-Street-Regeneration.pdf (360architecture.com)*

RELATED DOCUMENT : PAISLEY VISION

REPORT SUMMARY: The report is a guide for creating a vision for high street regeneration, based on the pilot project of Paisley Vision. It outlines a manifesto for change, consisting of 22 key moves to rebalance, repopulate and reposition the high street as a vibrant and diverse place for the whole community. The report also provides a methodology for developing a detailed project brief, engaging the community and stakeholders, gathering data and insight, and publishing the vision. It emphasises the importance of leadership, collaboration, innovation, evidence, and communication in delivering a successful vision.

The 22 recommendations are summarised below:

1. **Concentrate**: Define a focused study area around the High Street and its connected streets.
2. **Rebalance, Repopulate & Reposition**: Reduce retail dominance and introduce a mix of uses that meet the community's needs, such as residential, workplace, cultural, and leisure.
3. **Establish the Purpose**: Define the unique story and purpose of the town that will underpin the transformational moves and create a rich and authentic narrative.
4. **Identify Repurposing Opportunities and Be Bold**: Repurpose large single-use assets such as shopping centres to create more diverse, sustainable, and permeable urban blocks.
5. **Consolidate & Reduce Retail Dominance**: Relocate retained retail to street edges and replace underused or vacant units with other activities that serve the existing community and attract new visitors.
6. **Repopulate the High Street**: Introduce significant levels of urban living through mixed-use blocks and a variety of tenures and bring upper levels over retail space back to life through residential conversion.
7. **Introduce Attractors**: Introduce uses that can draw people into the town centre from the wider community, such as cinemas, food halls, galleries, museums, and performance spaces, and position them strategically to maximise their impact and visibility.

8. **Create Workplace**: Introduce workspaces that cater to the changing patterns of work and offer opportunities for flexible working and a healthy live/work balance.

9. **Strengthen the Cultural Offer**: Work with existing institutions and community groups to bring new cultural uses to the heart of the High Street and capitalise on the town's heritage and identity.

10. **Change Physical Perceptions**: Open up lanes and views that create a sense of discovery and surprise and improve the connectivity and legibility of the town centre.

11. **Repair the Streets**: Remove poor quality buildings that offer nothing to the urban environment and replace them with contemporary architecture that matches the quality and ambition of the historic facades.

12. **Enrich with Public Art & Light**: Use public art and dynamic lighting to transform the existing environment and create a variety of effects that can adapt to different seasons and events.

13. **Provide Places to Gather**: Create public spaces that can host events and activities that attract both local residents and visitors and encourage vibrant, all-year-round use.

14. **Ensure Your High Street is Accessible, Legible and Visible**: Make the High Street accessible to all, regardless of age or ability, and provide a memorable, cohesive, and legible wayfinding strategy that helps people navigate to and along the High Street.

15. **Promote Sustainable Transport**: Encourage the use of environmentally friendly public transport and cycling and provide facilities and infrastructure that support them.

16. **Develop a Balanced Approach to Car Use**: Recognise the role of cars in the current and future transport system and provide access and parking that supports the use of the High Street by the wider community.

17. **Make People Feel Safe and Welcome**: Increase activity and passive surveillance by repopulating the town centre and introduce street ambassadors to assist and reassure visitors and residents.

18. **Provide Welfare Facilities**: Provide welfare facilities that are suitable for all, regardless of age or mobility, and that can increase the footfall and dwell time of the High Street and promote inclusivity.

19. **Make Your Town a Hub for Lifelong Learning**: Work with education providers and community groups to provide learning opportunities and spaces for people of all ages and backgrounds and help them acquire new skills and meet new people.

20. **Work With Your Institutions**: Encourage key institutions such as education, health, and civic establishments to locate or remain in the town centre and contribute to its vibrancy and accessibility.

21. **Nurture 'Meanwhile' Uses**: Use vacant buildings or sites for temporary uses that benefit the community or provide curated retail or commercial use, while waiting for permanent development.

22. **Expand the Evening Economy**: Introduce uses that encourage activity and footfall beyond the typical retail hours, such as bars, restaurants, cinemas, and entertainment venues, and remove barriers such as licensing restrictions.

HSTF ROUTE MAP TO TRANSFORMATION

AUGUST 2021

HIGH STREET TASK FORCE

SOURCE : High Street Recovery to Transformation Route Map (highstreetstaskforce.org.uk)

EXTRACT: The challenges facing high streets before COVID were already driving change and exploration of a 'new normal'. The High Streets Task Force has synthesised this learning and ambition into a new framework: The Route Map to Transformation.

Covid-19 has accelerated change on the high street. The steady loss of multiple retailers is set to continue at a faster pace as the pandemic impacts on business turnover, debts grow, footfall in many centres has significantly reduced, and spending has gone elsewhere or changed. You cannot stop this change at a local level, but past experience says that some places will take this as an opportunity to renew their high street whilst others will lack the capacity or foresight to respond or not be organized or focused enough to make an effective response.

So how does your town become somewhere that is ready, able and willing to respond?

Previous work by partners in the Task Force has identified four strategic approaches to renewal (the 4Rs). These provide a structure to help you navigate your route to transformation. The four approaches are:

- **Restructuring** – putting in place the capacity, leadership and partnerships to deliver change and considering large-scale spatial change that will be needed to transform your town centre

- **Repositioning** – knowing your town, using relevant data and information to develop a collaborative, inspiring vision that achieves change

- **Rebranding** – establishing an identity and sense of place that can engender pride, commitment and attachment and making sure you communicate this across the whole community

- **Reinventing** – activate and animate your town, diversify its attractions. Multifunctional places offer different things that draw in footfall and spend.

Although each of the four steps is important, as every place is different, some may be more significant for your location than others now or require greater effort to progress. As a starting point to check which of the 4R strategies are most significant to your place, take time to answer the questions in the four sections of this downloadable diagnostic resource.

MAKING THE MOST OF HIGH STREET INVESTMENT

JANUARY 2024
INSTITUTE OF PLACE MANAGEMENT

REPORT SOURCE: *ipm_highstreview_report.pdf (placemanagement.org)*

REPORT SUMMARY:

Key recommendations

- **Build effective place partnerships**: The report argues that high street transformation requires collaborative leadership from different organisations and sectors, working together around a common vision for their location. It suggests that local authorities should support the formation and sustainability of place partnerships that can deliver strategic and tactical interventions for high street revival.
- **Develop a compelling and distinctive vision**: The report highlights the importance of having a clear and shared vision that reflects the identity and aspirations of the local community and differentiates the high street from other places. It advises that the vision should be co-created with a wide range of stakeholders and guide the delivery of short, medium and long term actions.
- **Activate the high street with events and offers**: The report emphasises the need to create a vibrant and diverse high street offer that attracts footfall and spending. It recommends that place partnerships should organise and coordinate a programme of events, markets, festivals and other activities that bring the high street to life and showcase its unique assets.
- **Invest in placemaking and public realm**: The report acknowledges the role of capital projects in improving the physical environment and infrastructure of the high street, but cautions against relying on them as a silver bullet. It suggests that placemaking and public realm improvements should be aligned with the vision and complemented by other measures that enhance the experience and functionality of the high street.

TO HELP HIGH STREETS SUCCEED IN 2024, IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER A DIFFERENT APPROACH

JANUARY 2024

INSTITUTE OF PLACE MANAGEMENT

ARTICLE SOURCE: *To help high streets succeed in 2024, it's time to consider a different approach | Institute of Place Management*

ARTICLE SUMMARY:

- **A different approach to high street success**: The author argues that local authorities need to ditch a model that relies on large capital projects and instead focus on day-to-day investment to animate high streets and create a more welcoming environment.
- **Expanding local leadership**: The author cites a report that shows how new partnerships between local government and other actors, such as Business Improvement Districts, Traders Forums, Community Interest Companies, etc., can help high streets adapt to change and deliver events and activities to drive footfall.
- **The role of parking**: The author quotes the boss of Lush, a beauty retailer, who says that councils are too reliant on car parking and business rates, and that high streets need to be more vibrant to attract new business investment. The author also mentions that some partnerships are offering free rent to attract exciting new businesses, which may imply that parking fees are not the main barrier to high street vitality.
- **References**: The article contains many references to the work of the High Streets Task Force, the Institute of Place Management, and the Journal of Place Management and Development. It also refers to an article from The Times and a quote from Jane Jacobs, a famous urbanist.

RELEVANT EXTRACT REPRODUCED IN FULL:

"The problem with this analysis from Lush's boss is that the reality of the UK's straitened public finances means local government is unlikely to be the recipient of government largesse any time soon.

That's why we need a recognition across the business community and among the wider public that councils cannot cope with the changing needs of high streets on their own.

They need support and what we've observed across many towns through the work of the High Streets Task Force is that towns that are bucking the trend are those that are recognising this and seeking to expand high street leadership capacity through new vehicles."

BOGNOR REGIS TOWN CENTRE: FOOTFALL PATTERNS 2016 - 2023

And finally, a chart showing footfall figures from 2016 – 2023, excluding the COVID years, and an observation that, without organised, regular, in-person research / surveys, it is impossible to separate out the impact of one measure on town centre footfall.