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South Ayrshire Town Centre Assessment

Girvan Town Centre: Shopper and Resident Surveys

November 2014

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European Union
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A project supported by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme managed by the EU Programmes Body

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1.0 SURVEY BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Background

1.1 South Ayrshire Council, along with Project Partners, has been awarded funding from the European Regional Development Fund's INTERREG IVA Programme for delivery of the Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) Project. The Project has been funded through Priority 2, Theme 1: Public Sector Collaboration.

1.2 A Joint Committee of 5 local authorities (Ballymena Borough Council, Coleraine Borough Council, Larne Borough Council, Sligo County Council and South Ayrshire Council) has been established with Ballymena Borough Council acting in role of Lead Partner. A Partnership Agreement has been produced to provide governance guidelines and an operating framework.

1.3 The purpose of the study is to gauge the views and priority issues of customers, businesses and residents of the towns. The town centres to be included are: Ayr, Girvan, Maybole, Prestwick, and Troon. The issues to be investigated include public space and environment, accessibility and events. Cameron Research, in partnership with IBP Strategy and Research, were appointed to conduct a series of surveys to establish the views and priority issues of customers, businesses and residents of the towns and their landward villages.

Objectives

1.4 This analysis will inform the development of town centre plans in South Ayrshire to deliver improvements for businesses, shoppers and residents. Overall, the purpose is to inform the South Ayrshire Strategy Plan to provide consumers with a compelling reason to use the shops and services of each town centre. This work will help to inform the strategy and planning process and provide a baseline against which future initiatives can be measured.

1.5 Four distinct surveys were conducted in August 2014:

- **shopper/customer survey:** recruited from within each of the 5 town centres to collect information on their specific shopping trip/services visit, plus perceptions and attitudes towards the town centre offering
- **resident survey:** recruited within the settlement boundary of each of the 5 towns and landward villages to expand the information gathered from the town centre surveys
- **commercial operators/business survey**: to determine issues and concerns regarding the area, from the business perspective
- **South Ayrshire resident survey**: representative population survey within South Ayrshire to ask specifically about usage of, and attitudes towards, Ayr town centre.

1.6 For shoppers and residents, questions included demographics, shopping locations, frequency of visits, shopping patterns, perceptions of safety and cleanliness, awareness of offer, spend profile, areas for improvement and alternative shopping locations.

1.7 For businesses, questions includes size and type of business, trading operations, perceptions of trading circumstances, assessment of town centre facilities, potential barriers to business and areas for improvement.

1.8 **This document presents the key findings for the Girvan Shoppers and Residents surveys. The Business surveys and the South Ayrshire Residents survey are detailed in separate reports.**

Methodology

1.9 **Shopper Survey**: 100 face-to-face interviews were undertaken with shoppers in Girvan Town Centre. Shoppers were randomly recruited in Dalrymple Street at two locations: near Chalmers Arcade and near Hendries butchers shop.

1.10 **Residents Survey**: 76 face-to-face interviews were undertaken with residents within Girvan town centre boundary and the landward villages. A door-to-door interview methodology was used, based on addresses in the South Ayrshire Edited Electoral Register. A broad spread of ages and genders was achieved in these interviews and results were weighted further to ensure that the age and gender profile was broadly reflective of the South Ayrshire average. This weighting process did not, however, have any material impact on the overall findings.

1.11 This report provides a summary of key results in graphical form with associated commentary.

1.12 Detailed appendices are included under separate cover. These include the survey questionnaire (Appendix 1), detailed data tables (Appendix 2) and a full listing of "other" responses and responses to open-ended questions (Appendix 3).

2.0 GIRVAN CONCLUSIONS: SHOPPER AND RESIDENT

Shoppers and residents are primarily visiting Girvan to use the food shops and financial/professional services and these outlets are an important factor in supporting usage of the town centre. There is, however, a wider mix of shops and services which are supporting usage of Girvan town centre: shoppers are more likely to be using café/restaurants and browsing/window shopping reflecting, perhaps, those visiting the area or those passing through town centre, while residents are more likely to be using professional health services and non-food shops.

The key spontaneous and main prompted reason for visiting Girvan town centre was the convenience of its location as a main shopping area; other prompted reasons for visiting were less common but included both quality and variety of shops/services.

The presence of financial/professional services and cafes/restaurants in the town centre were rated positively overall. Residents were also favourable towards the public transport and provision of libraries/public halls/council facilities and shoppers towards the safe/secure environment.

An overall improvement to the shops/services is the biggest opportunity to increase usage of Girvan town centre; this includes less empty shops, more large/chain stores, more small/specialised shops and more variety of food shops. Consideration could also be given to the provision of more local events/festivals and more special street markets i.e. Christmas Market.

Analysis of evening usage of Girvan is limited by a small analysis base, but directionally there is an opportunity to increase the variety of things to do in the evening.

3.0 OVERALL SUMMARY: GIRVAN SHOPPER AND RESIDENT

Profile of Shoppers and Residents

68% of shoppers were female, which is expected in town centre surveys of this type, and 54% of residents were female, which is in-line with demographic profile of South Ayrshire residents. Respondents were from a range of age groups, with 50% of shoppers and 44% of residents aged 55 and over.

The occupational status of head of household in both surveys was most likely to be working. The majority of the shoppers either lived locally or worked in Girvan town centre. However, 32% were visitors to the area which may impact on their usage of, and attitudes towards, the town centre.

Overall usage

The **main** purposes for visiting Girvan town centre were primarily for food shopping and financial/professional services. Residents are more likely to be using professional services (health or financial/professional) and non-food shopping and shoppers are more likely to be using café/restaurants and browsing/window shopping. Over a third of residents are using the food shops at least three times a week, which is an important factor in driving footfall to the town centre.

Frequency of usage of the town centre in the past year is stable overall. Residents are more likely than shoppers to use a car (58% vs. 44%) and around a quarter of both surveys are likely to walk into town. The majority of both shoppers and residents spend under 2 hours in the town centre.

Purchase behaviour

The main purchase or service types reflect the main purposes for visiting the town centre i.e. business/financial services and food shops, plus usage of bars/cafes/restaurants by shoppers. The average total spend by shoppers on the occasion of their visit was £32.34 and the average total for residents on their most recent visit was £57.37.

The key reason for using Girvan town centre shops/services was the convenience of the location as the closest main shopping area; this was the case for shoppers and residents. Other reasons for usage were lower but included the quality and variety of shops/services.

Attitudes and factors that would increase usage

Girvan town centre was commonly rated by residents as **very good** for financial/professional services, access via public transport, library/public halls/council facilities and street cleaning. It was commonly rated by shoppers as **very good** for cafes/restaurants and safe/secure environment. Features commonly rated as **poor/very poor** included non-food shopping, traffic congestion/system and provision of public toilets.

The most popular changes to encourage increased usage of the town centre were the same for both surveys: improved shopping offering. This included less empty shops, more large/chain stores, more small/specialised shops and more variety of food shops: "*More food shops, more chain stores and women's clothes shops", "Less empty shops, its looking really bad", "An Aldi and more clothing and shoe shops", "A ladies clothes store", "Big name shops*". Shoppers also wanted more local events/festivals and special street markets.

Usage of different locations for shopping/services

Residents used both Ayr Heathfield and Girvan town centre as their primary location for food shopping and Ayr town centre for non-food shopping; Girvan was the primary location for use of services and cafes/restaurants. For residents, Ayr town centre was a support location for shops/services.

Shoppers were most likely to use Girvan town centre for shops/services overall with a proportion using other locations outside South Ayrshire i.e. Dumfries or Stranraer. These could reflect the home locations of the visitors to the area and residents travelling to other shopping areas

Evening usage of town centre

Only a small proportion of shoppers and residents visit Girvan town centre in the evening and this is too small for statistical analysis. However, the findings indicated that there is an opportunity to increase the variety of things to do in the evening.

4.0 GIRVAN SHOPPER SUMMARY

Shopper profile

There was a female skew to the shopper profile, with 68% of respondents being female and 32% male, which is usual for shopper surveys of this type. Shoppers were from a range of age groups, with 50% aged 55 or over. The occupational status of the head of household was mainly working (52%) and 33% were retired.

The majority of shoppers (68%) lived locally or worked in town centre and 32% were visitors to the area. Therefore, not all shoppers and service users surveyed are necessarily local residents or workers.

Overall usage

The most common **main** purposes for visiting the town centre were food shopping (23%) and work/business (21%). **Other** purposes were more varied and more commonly included non-food shopping (31%), café/restaurants (29%) and browsing (24%). Once a week usage of shops/services was: 57% for financial/professional services, 54% for food shopping and 45% for non-food shopping. This reflects a positive frequency of usage of these shops and services in Girvan.

Frequency of usage of Girvan town centre has been stable in the past year. 44% of shoppers used a car to travel to the town centre, with 24% walking and 24% taking a bus. The majority of shoppers (64%) intended to spend under 2 hours in the town centre and 19% to spend less than 1 hour.

Purchase behaviour

The main purchases made or services used (or intended to) were: 48% for business/financial services, 46% for bar/café/restaurants, 36% for non-food retail and 35% for food retail. An average of £10.38 was spent in café/restaurants with the average spend on other categories being under £10. The total average spend in Girvan town centre on the occasion of the visit was £32.35.

The main prompted reason for shopping in Girvan on this occasion was the convenience of it being the closest main shopping area (64%). Other reasons were the quality and variety of shops/services, although these were mentioned less commonly. The main spontaneous answer category for visiting was positive comments on shops/services (31%) - *"Nice variety of shops", "Good cafes", "Nice, friendly town centre"*. Spontaneous reasons for visiting reflect the number of visitors to the area - 20% of shoppers were in Girvan for main reason of a day trip/passing through.

Attitudes and factors that would encourage usage

Features of Girvan town centre which were commonly rated as **very good** were: café/restaurants (30%), safe/secure environment (20%) and financial/professional services (14%). This favourable rating of cafes/restaurants supports the findings for these commonly being one of the main services used, or intended to use, in the town centre by shoppers.

Features which received more than 10% rating as **very poor/poor** were: non-food shopping (14%), traffic congestion (14%) and traffic system (16%).

The key suggested changes to encourage higher usage of shops/services in the town centre were: less empty shops (59%), more large/chain stores (40%), more small/specialised shops (33%), more local events/festivals (24%) and more special street markets (24%).

Shoppers also felt that the balance of types of shops could be improved: 60% felt there were **too few** large/chain stores and 46% **too few** small/independent shops. 40% felt there were **too many** charity shops. The key spontaneous category to improve shoppers experience was that of improvements to shops/services (48%): *"Aldi and more clothing and shoe shops", "A ladies clothes store", "Big name shops needed", "A mix of clothes shops*".

Usage of different locations for shopping/services

Girvan town centre was the **main** shopping/service location used overall, with a proportion using a variety of locations which are further away i.e. Dumfries, Stranraer, Carlisle and Belfast. This perhaps reflects the home location of visitors to the area as well as residents travelling to other shopping areas. Ayr town centre was a key **other** location for services and shops. Closeness for shopping or service use was the key reason for usage as a main location and a good variety of shops/services was also an important factor.

Evening usage of town centre

The base of shoppers who visit Girvan town centre in the evening was too low to show numerical analysis for the purposes and frequency of visiting the town centre in the evening.

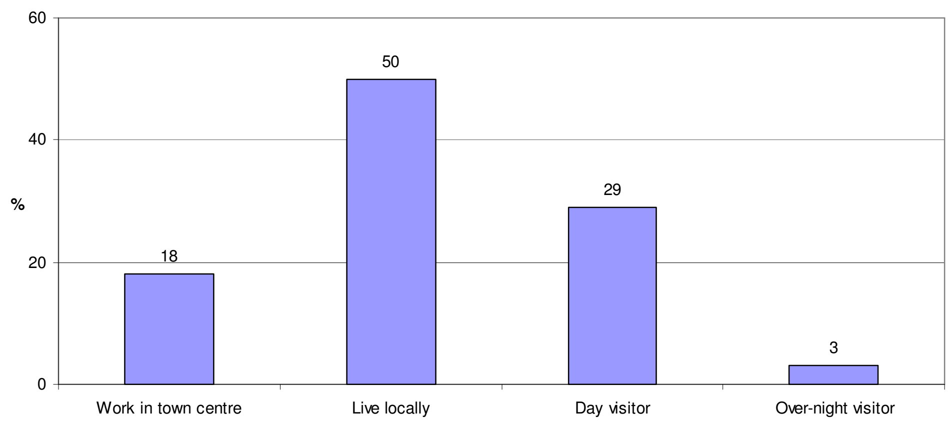
5.0 GIRVAN SHOPPER KEY FINDINGS: TOWN CENTRE

Shopper profile

5.1 Shoppers were shown a list of types of visitor to the town centre and ask to select one which best described themselves. 50% lived locally, 18% worked in the town centre and 32% were visitors to the area. Further detailed analysis of the data shows that 27% of shoppers live outside South Ayrshire, including 6% outside Scotland. Therefore, not all shoppers and service users surveyed in the town centre are necessarily local residents or workers

Figure 5.1 Type of visitor to town centre

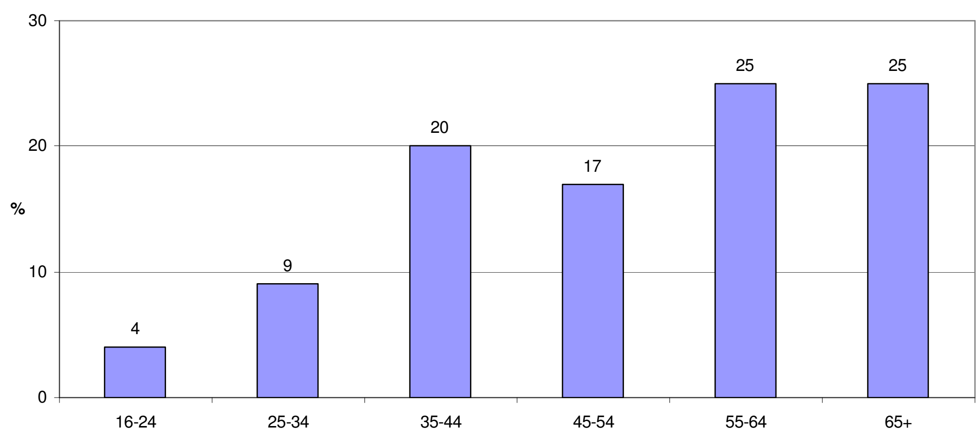
Which type of visitor to this town centre best describes you today? Base 100



5.2 There was a female skew to the shopper profile, with 68% female and 32% male; a female skew is typical in shopper surveys. The age group profile of visitors is shown in Figure 5.2, 50% of shoppers were aged 55+.

Figure 5.2 Age of visitor to town centre

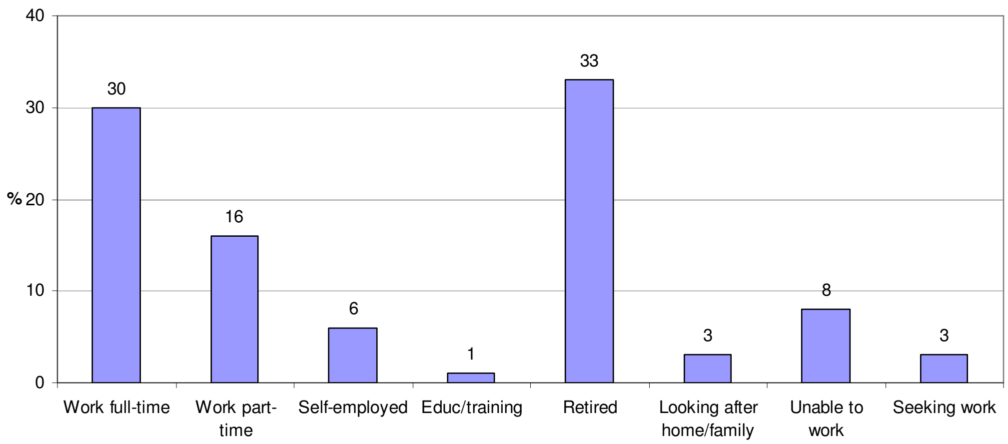
Into which of these age bands do you fall? Base 100



5.3 Analysis of the occupational status of the head of household for shoppers shows that the majority were working: 30% were working full time and a further 16% part-time. 33% of the household heads were retired.

Figure 5.3 Occupational status of head of household

Which best describes the current occupational status of your head of household? Base 100

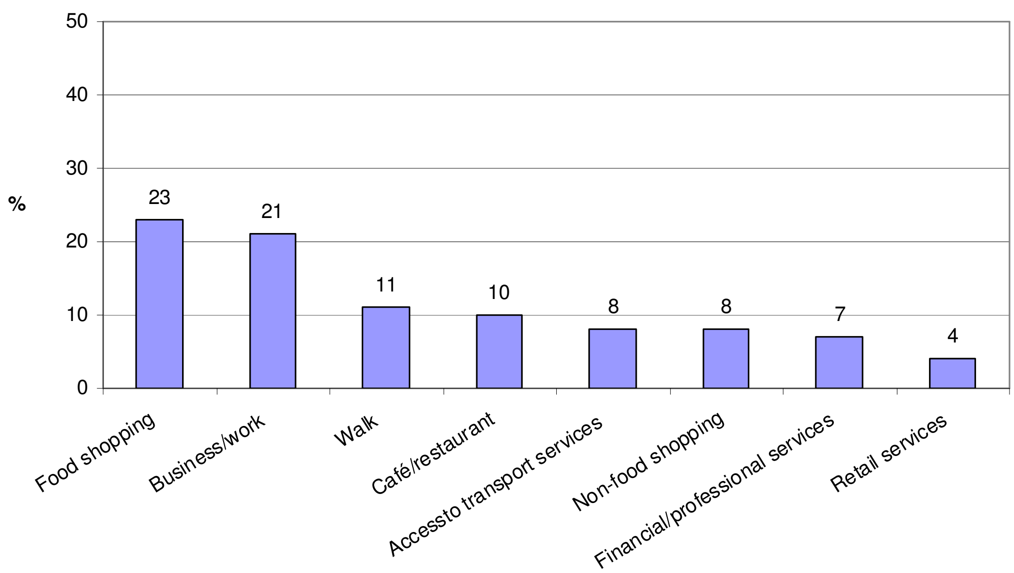


Overall usage

5.4 Shoppers were shown a list of purposes for visiting the town centre and asked to select **one main** purpose for their current visit. The most common responses are shown below. Food shopping was highest (23%), followed by business/work (21%), a walk (11%) and café/restaurants (10%. Other main reasons to visit were relatively low.

Figure 5.4 Main purpose for visit

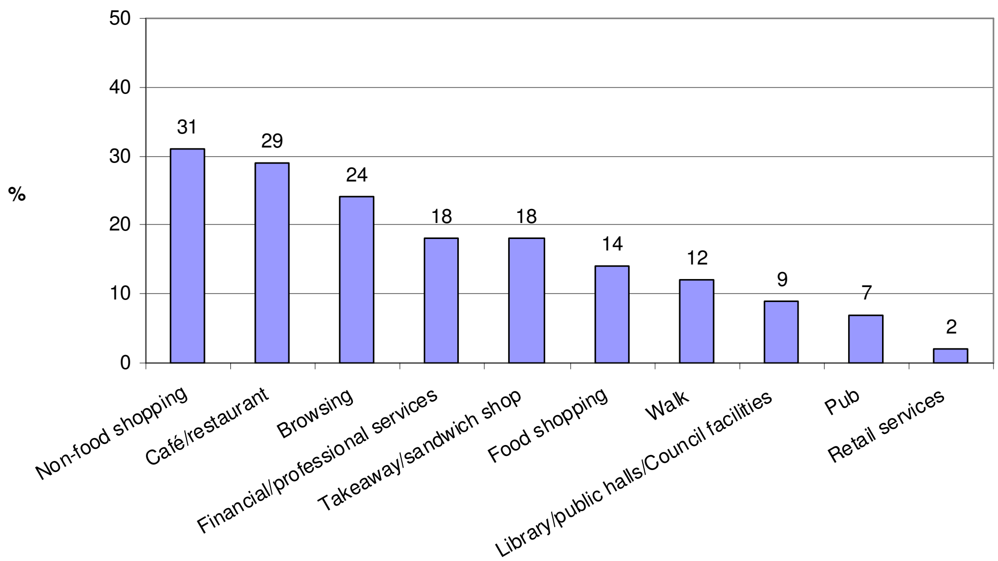
What is your MAIN reason for visiting this town centre today? Base 100



5.5 Shoppers were then asked to select any **other purposes** for their current visit and the most common of these are shown below. This generated a broader set of responses across a variety of purposes: non-food shopping (31%), café/restaurants (29%), browsing (24%), financial/professional services e.g. bank, solicitor (18%) and takeaway/sandwich shop (18%).

Figure 5.5 Other purposes for visit

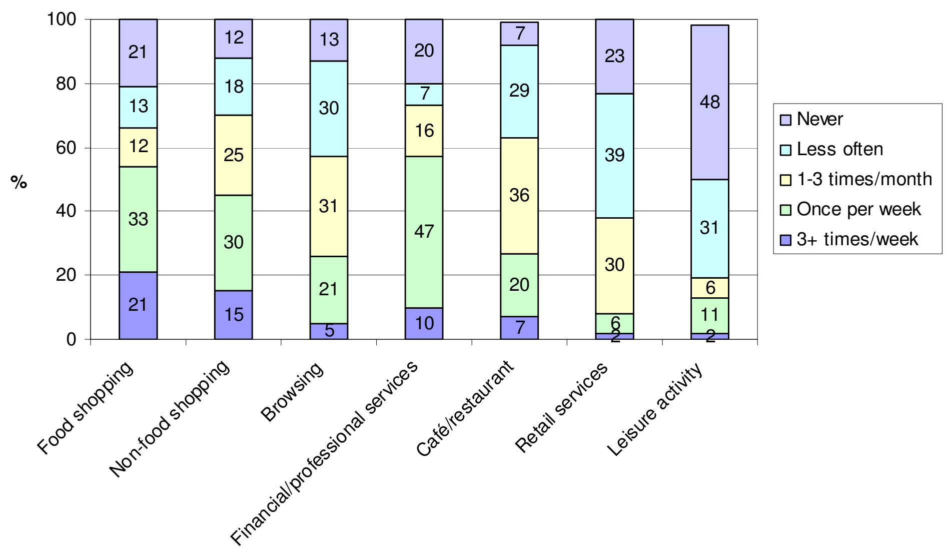
What OTHER reasons do you have for visiting this town centre today? Base 100



5.6 A list of types of shopping/services was shown and shoppers asked how often, if at all, they visited the town centre for each[1]. 21% visited at least 3 times a week for food shopping and 15% for non-food shopping. 57% visited for financial/professional services at least once a week and 57% visited for browsing/window shopping at least once a month.

Figure 5.6 Frequency of usage[2]

How often do you visit this town centre during the day? Base 100



5.7 Figure 5.7 shows how the frequency of shopper visits to town centre has changed over the last year. The majority (92%) are using the centre about the same frequency as last year, reflecting stability in usage.

Table 5.7 Change in frequency of visits

How has the frequency of your visiting to this town centre changed over the last year?

Base: 100	
	%
More often	3
About the same	92
Less often	5

[1] Throughout the report, the numbers in certain graphs and tables may not sum to 100%. This may be due to "not answered responses", to rounding of numbers or to the existence of multiple response questions (in which case, results may sum to more than 100%).

[2] There may be occasional graphs where certain individual numbers cannot be identified because these are low numbers. In these circumstances, the reader is directed to the appendices that accompany the report for full details.

5.8 Table 5.8 shows that 44% of shoppers used a car to travel to the town centre on this occasion and 24% walked. A further 28% used public transport (bus/train).

Table 5.8 Method of transport to travel to town centre

How did you travel to this town centre today?

Base: 100	
	%
Car	44
Walk	24
Bus	24
Train	4

5.9 Table 5.9 shows that 19% were planning to spend less than 1 hour in the town centre, 45% intended to spend between 1-2 hours and 29% between 3-5 hours. NB: for those who work in the centre, this question referred to the period spent on shopping or using a service on this occasion.

Figure 5.9 Length of time shopping/using a service

How long do you intend to spend in this town centre today?

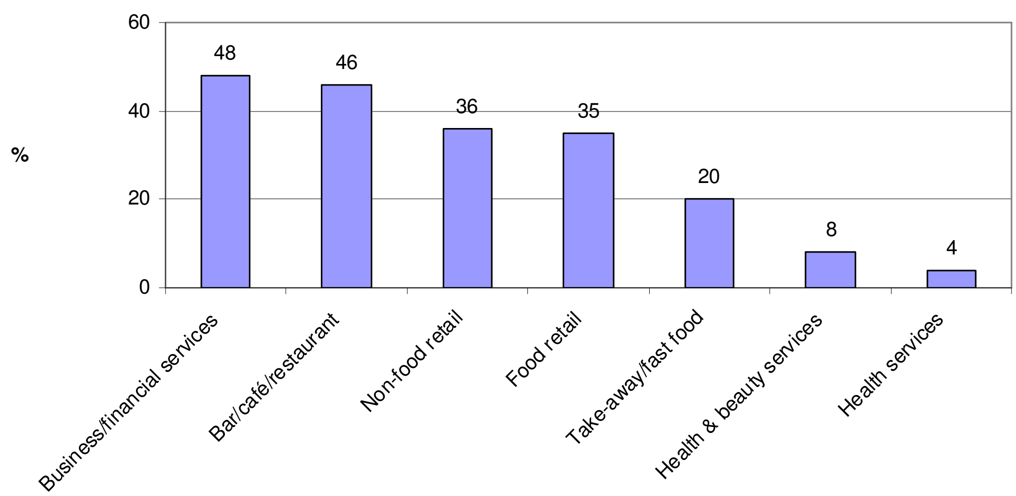
Base: 100	
	%
Less than 1 hour	19
1-2 hours	45
3-4 hours	29
5-6 hours	6
All day	0

Purchase behaviour

5.10 The types of purchases made or services used (or intended to) are shown in Figure 5.10. The most common answers were: business/financial services e.g. banks, estate agents (48%), bar/café/restaurant (46%), non-food retail (36%) and food retail (36%).

Figure 5.10 Types of purchases/ services used or intended

What have you bought/expect to buy and/or which services have you used/expect to use today? Base 100



5.11 For each of the types of shopping or services used or intended to use, shoppers were asked their spend/likely spend on this occasion, using a range of spend categories. Taking the mid-point values from the various categories of expenditure (and assuming 'more than £100' as £100), the average spend has been calculated, based on those who gave an answer. Purchases at bar/café/restaurants had the highest average spend (£10.38) with the average spend for each of the other categories being under £10. The total average spend in the town centre on this occasion was £32.35.

Table 5.12 Average spend on this occasion

Business and Financial Services	£4.67
Bar/Cafe/Restaurants	£10.38
Retail (non-food)	£5.74
Retail (food)	£7.96
Takeaway and Fast Food	£1.56
Health Services (e.g. dentist, opticians)	£0.36
Health and Beauty Services (e.g. hairdresser, nail salon)	£1.68
Other	£0.00
Total	**£32.35**

Reasons for usage of town centre

5.12 Table 5.12 shows the key reasons shoppers gave for using this town centre rather than somewhere else on this occasion. This was asked as an open-ended question and respondent verbatim answers were coded into categories. The key category was that of a general positivity to shops/services (31%) followed by convenience (24%). A selection of verbatim comments is shown in Table 5.12.1 and full listing of comments can be found in the appendices.

Table 5.12 Reasons for using town centre

Why are you using the shops/services in this town centre today as opposed to using somewhere else?

Base: 62	
	%
Positive to shops/service	31
Convenience generally	24
Closeness to work	15
Passing through	13
Specific shops/service	11
Holiday/day trip	6
General positive aspects	5
Friends/family	3

Table 5.12.1 Example of verbatim reasons for using town centre

Reasons to use	**Town Centre**
Positive to shops/services	"Good variety of shops" "Good cafes/restaurants" "It's a good area for kids have something to eat and go to parks" "I like the shops in Girvan" "Nice friendly town centre, then go to harbour"
Convenience generally	"Nearest to where I live" "Near my work" "Within walking distance for me" "Shops are good and next to work"
Passing through	"Passing through, looks nice" "Travelling, stopped for something to eat" "En route to Glasgow"

5.13 Shoppers were shown a list of reasons for visiting the town centre and asked to select **one main** reason for their current visit and then **other reasons**. Closest main shopping area was the highest main reason to visit (64%). Other reasons for this current visit included: variety of shops/services (45%), quality of shops/services (43%) and attractive/well-maintained town centre (32%).

Figure 5.13 Reasons for visit

What is your MAIN reason for using shops or services in this town centre today?
What OTHER reasons for using shops or services in this town centre today?

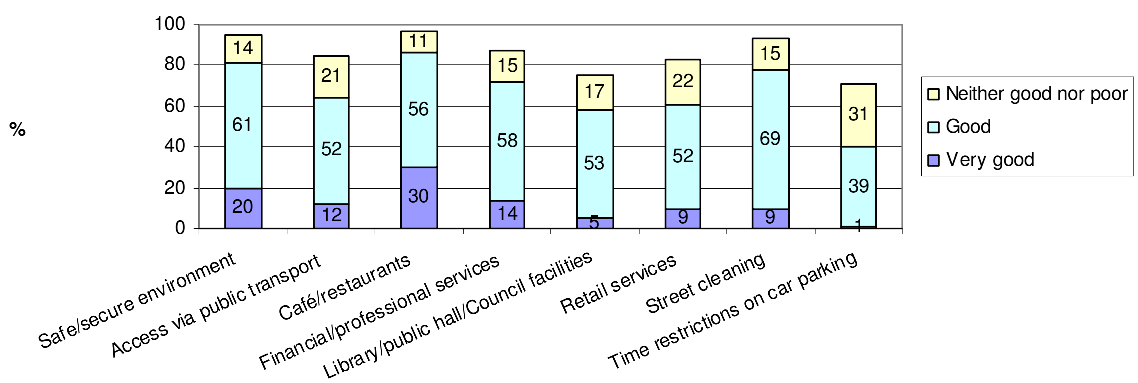
Base: 100	Main reason	Other reasons
	%	%
Closest main shopping area	64	6
Quality of café/restaurants	13	28
Quality of shops/services	7	43
To go to a specific shop/access a specific service	4	2
Positive feel to town centre	8	29
Variety of shops/services	2	45
Good car parking	1	12
Attractive/well-maintained town centre	0	32
Good public transport	0	12
Other answers	3	3

Attitudes and factors that would encourage usage

5.14 A list of town centre features was shown and shoppers asked to rate each one as: very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor or very poor. Features shown in Figure 5.14 did not receive any rating as **poor/very poor.** Most common features rated as **very good** were: café/restaurants (30%), safe/secure environment (20%) and financial/professional services (14%). The feature rated highest as **good** was street cleaning (69%).

Figure 5.14 Attitudes towards town centre

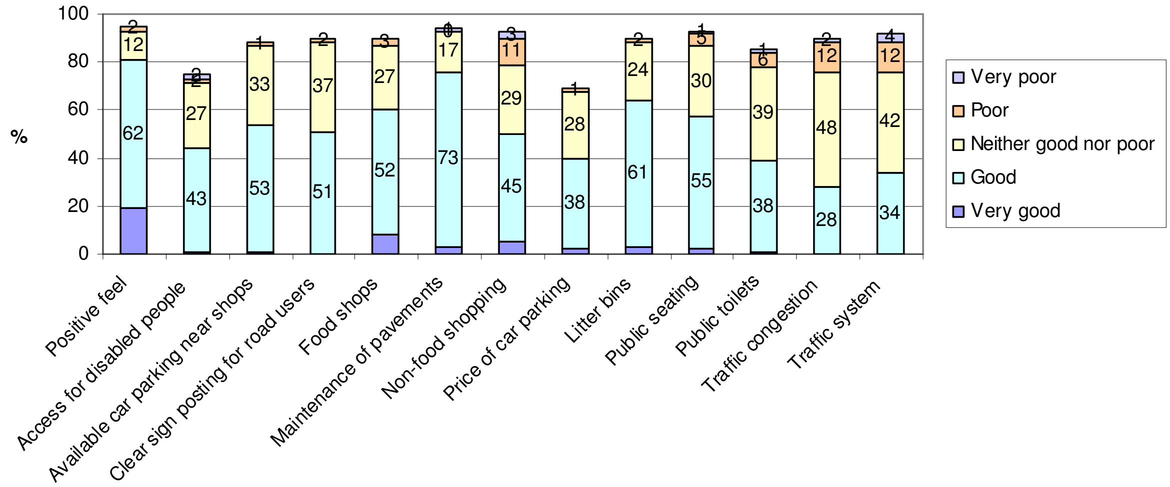
How do you rate this town centre with regard to the following? Base 100



5.15 Figure 5.15 shows those town centre features which received ratings as very poor/poor, albeit by a minority of respondents. Features which received more than 10% rating as **very poor/poor** were: non-food shopping (14%), traffic congestion (14%) and traffic system (16%).

Figure 5.15 Attitudes towards town centre

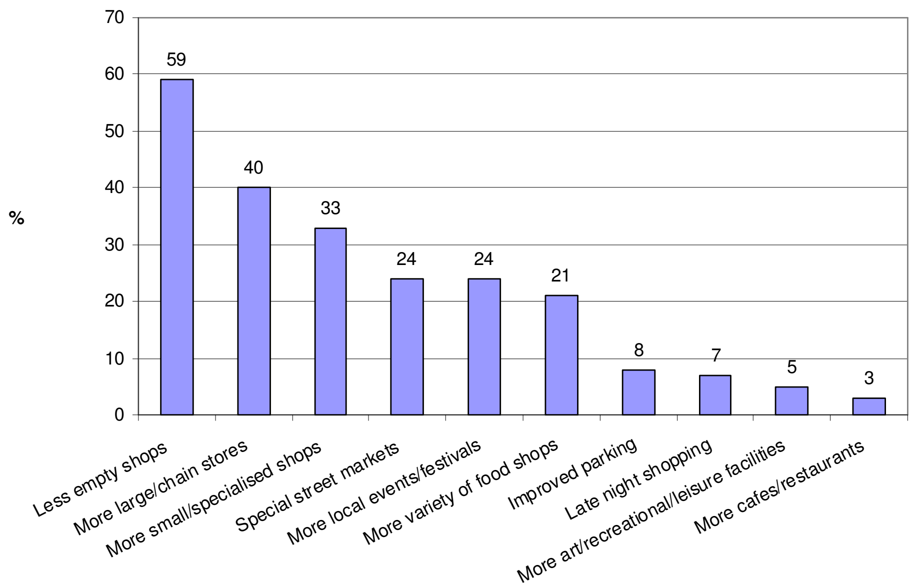
How do you rate this town centre with regard to the following? Base 100



5.16 Table 5.16 shows the changes to the town centre which would encourage shoppers to use the town centre more often; shoppers were asked to provide up to three changes from a list and the most common are detailed below. The most popular changes suggested were: less empty shops (59%), more large/chain stores (40%), more small/specialised shops (33%), more local events/festivals (24%) and more special street markets i.e. French, Christmas (24%).

Figure 5.16 Changes to attract more usage of town centre

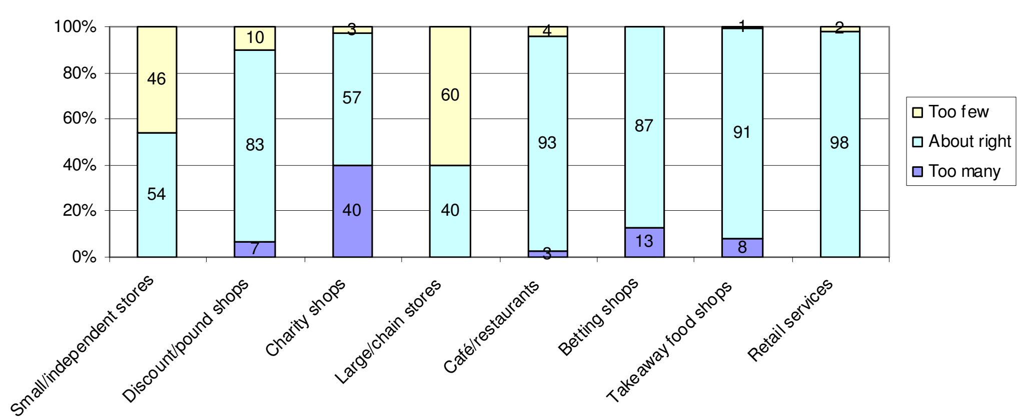
Which, if any, of these changes to shops/services would encourage you to use this town centre more? Base 100



5.17 Shoppers were shown a list of different types of outlets in the town centre and, for each, they were asked if there were: too many, about right or too few. 60% felt there were **too few** large/chain stores, 46% **too few** small/independent stores and 40% felt there were **too many** charity shops.

Figure 5.17 Attitudes towards types of outlets

What do you think about the number of these types of outlets in this town centre? Base 100



5.18 Table 5.18 shows the spontaneous categories which shoppers felt would improve their shopping experience in the town centre. This was asked as an open-ended question and respondent verbatim answers were coded into categories. The key category was that of improvements to shops/services (48%). A selection of verbatim comments is shown in Table 5.18.1 and full listing of comments can be found in the appendices.

Table 5.18 Improvements to shopping experience

What do you think would improve your shopping experience in this town centre?

Base: 71	
	%
Improvements to shops/services	48
Fill empty shops	28
Better/cheaper parking	15
Less traffic/traffic improvements	14

Table 5.18.1 Example of verbatim reasons for improving town centre

Reasons to use	**Town Centre**
Improvements to shops/services	*"Aldi; more clothing and shoe shops"* *"A ladies clothes stores"* *"Big name shops needed"* *"A mix of clothes shops"* *"A more diversified range"* *"More independent markets"* *"Variety of clothing, shoes, kids' clothing"*
Fill empty shops	*"Fill empty shops with more independent shops"* *"Fill empty shops, reduce the rates"* *"Fill the empty shops it would make street look a lot better"*
Better/cheaper parking	*"More parking - better signage for parking"* *"More car parking near shops"* *"Better disabled parking"*

Usage of different locations for shopping/services

5.19 Shoppers were shown a list of locations for different types of shopping and services and asked to select their **one main** location for each. Table 5.19 shows the key main locations. Girvan town centre was the primary location used overall, with a proportion under 'other' using Dumfries, Stranraer, Carlisle and Belfast, perhaps reflecting the home location of visitors to the area and residents travelling to other shopping areas.

Table 5.19 Main location for shopping and service types

Which of these shopping areas is your MAIN location for each of these types of shopping or services? Base 100

	Food	Non-food	Financial service	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Ayr, Heathfield	7	7	1	0	0
Ayr, Town Centre	10	14	8	12	11
Girvan Town Centre	**53**	**48**	**62**	**59**	**60**
Other/Not answered	30	31	29	29	29

5.20 Shoppers were then asked to select any **other locations** for shopping and services and responses are shown in Table 5.20. Results show that Ayr town centre was a key other location for usage of services and shops.

Table 5.20 Other locations used for shopping and services

Which OTHER shopping areas do you use for each of these types of shopping or services? Base 100

	Food	Non-food	Financial service	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Ayr, Heathfield	4	4	4	1	1
Ayr, Town Centre	29	33	32	30	40
Girvan Town Centre	16	18	11	11	10
Kilmarnock	2	3	4	3	3
Maybole	4	3	3	3	3
Glasgow City	3	7	4	6	8
Other	17	7	16	16	17

5.21 Shoppers were given a list of reasons why they might mainly use a shopping or service location and asked to select as many as applied; the most common responses are shown below. For all types of shopping and services, the closeness of the location was the main factor for use. For food and non-food shopping, a good variety of shops/services was also an important factor (26% and 31% respectively).

Table 5.21 Reasons to use main location for shopping and services

What are your reasons for using this location for this type of shopping/services?

Base 100

	Food	Non-food	Financial services	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Closest main shopping area	80	77	92	88	83
Variety of shops and services	26	31	16	16	18
Quality of shops and services	17	20	13	16	13
Quality of café/restaurants	7	7	6	6	14
Attractive/well-maintained environment	1	3	3	2	2

Evening usage of town centre

5.22 Of the 100 shoppers interviewed, 16% visited the town centre in the evening. Those who did not most commonly gave the following reasons: no need/ don't go out (52%) and prefer to go elsewhere (42%).

5.23 The base of shoppers who visit Girvan Town Centre in the evening is too low to show numerical analysis for the purposes and frequency of visiting town centre in the evening.

5.24 A list of features about the town centre in the evening was shown and shoppers asked to rate each one as: very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor or very poor. Numerical analysis cannot be conducted on the low base who answered this question.

6.0 GIRVAN RESIDENT SUMMARY

Respondent profile

54% of respondents were female and 46% were male; this is in-line with the demographic profile of South Ayrshire. Residents were from a range of age groups, with 44% aged 55+. The occupational status of the head of household was mainly working (57%) and 37% were retired.

Overall usage

The key **main** purposes for normally using the town centre were for food shopping (44%) and financial/professional services (30%). **Other** purposes show a broader spread of reasons, particular use of services: professional health services (50%), financial/professional services (46%), non-food shopping (43%), café/restaurants (35%) and takeaway/sandwich shops (31%). 35% of residents visit the town centre for food shopping at least three times a week, showing the importance of this retail sector in Girvan town centre. Shops/services used at least once a week were: professional/financial services (68%) and café/restaurants (52%).

The frequency of usage of the town centre has been very stable in the past year. Over half (58%) of residents normally drive to the town centre and 29% walk. The majority (68%) generally spend under 2 hours in the town centre and 15% less than one hour.

Purchase behaviour

The main purchases made or services used at residents' most recent visit to the town centre were food shopping (49%) and business/financial services (41%), reflecting the main purposes of visiting. The total average spend in Girvan town centre on the residents' most recent visit was £57.37.

The key spontaneous and **main** prompted reason for visiting was the convenience of being the closest main shopping area (89% and 73% respectively): *"It's handy, in and out quickly", "Within walking distance".* **Other** prompted reasons showed a slightly wider range including: quality of cafes/restaurants (14%) and specific shop/service (13%).

Attitudes and factors that would encourage usage

The features in Girvan town centre which were commonly rated as **very good** were: access via public transport (31%), financial/professional services (28%) and retail services e.g. hairdresser, shoe repair (26%). Features commonly rated as **good** included: library/public halls/council facilities (86%), street cleaning (84%) and safe/ secure environment (75%).

Features commonly rated as **poor/very poor** included: non-food shopping (48%), provision of public toilets (39%) and provision of public seating (25%).

The key spontaneous category to improve shoppers experience in the town centre was better shops/services (81%): *"More food shops, more chain stores and women's clothes shops", "Less empty shops, its looking really bad, more types of shops".* The most popular suggested changes to encourage increased use of the town centre also related to the shops: less empty shops (68%), more large/chain stores (46%) and more small/specialised shops (43%). The perceived balance of types of shops confirms these findings: 56% of respondents felt there were too many charity shops, 80% too few large/chain stores and 67% too few small, independent stores.

Usage of different locations for shopping/services

Both Ayr Heathfield and Girvan town centre were primary locations for food shopping and Ayr town centre was the primary location for non-food shopping. Girvan town centre was the main location used for services and cafes and Ayr town centre was a support location for use of services. Being the closest main shopping area was the key reason to use a location; other common factors were variety of shops/services for food and non-food shopping.

Evening usage of town centre

The base of shoppers who visit Girvan town centre in the evening is too low to show numerical analysis for the purposes and frequency of visiting town centre in the evening. Features which were commonly rated as good were: safe/secure environment, positive feel, access via public transport and well maintained/attractive environment. Features which were commonly rated as poor were: good cafes/restaurants and variety of things to do in the evening.

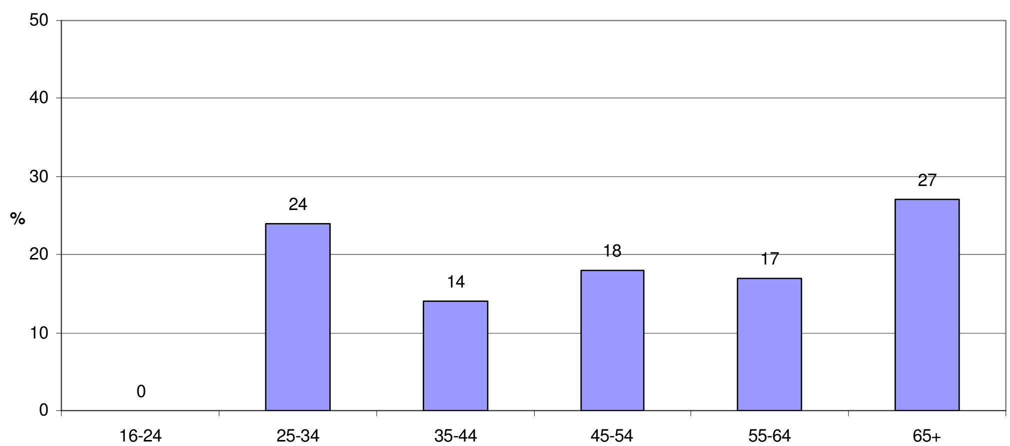
7.0 GIRVAN RESIDENT KEY FINDINGS: TOWN CENTRE

Resident profile

7.1 The survey was designed to ensure that the reported gender and age profile of residents broadly matched the representative demographic profile of South Ayrshire residents. Accordingly, 54% of residents were female and 46% male. The age group profile of residents is shown in Figure 7.1, 44% of residents in the survey were aged 55+.

Figure 7.1 Age of resident

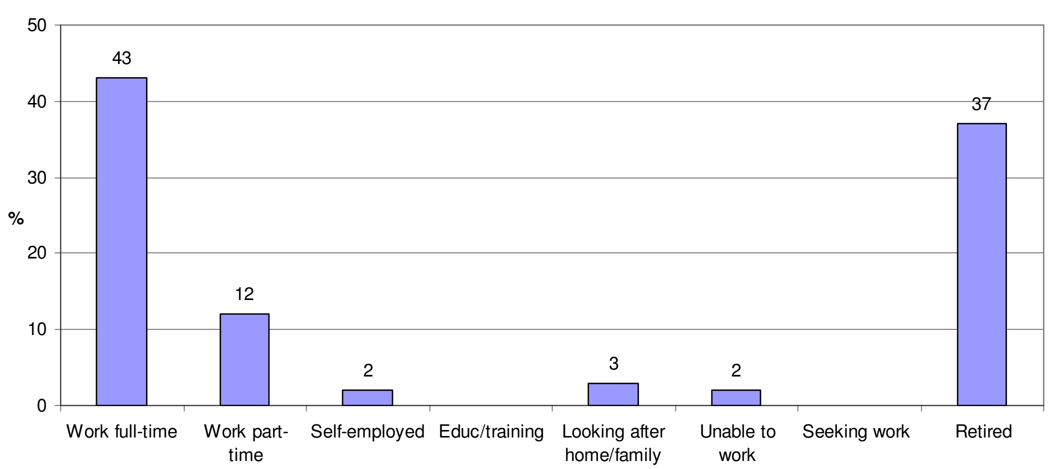
Into which of these age bands do you fall? Base 76



7.2 Analysis of the occupational status of the head of household for residents shows that 57% were working and 37% were retired.

Figure 7.2 Occupational status of head of household

Which best describes the current occupational status of your head of household? Base 76

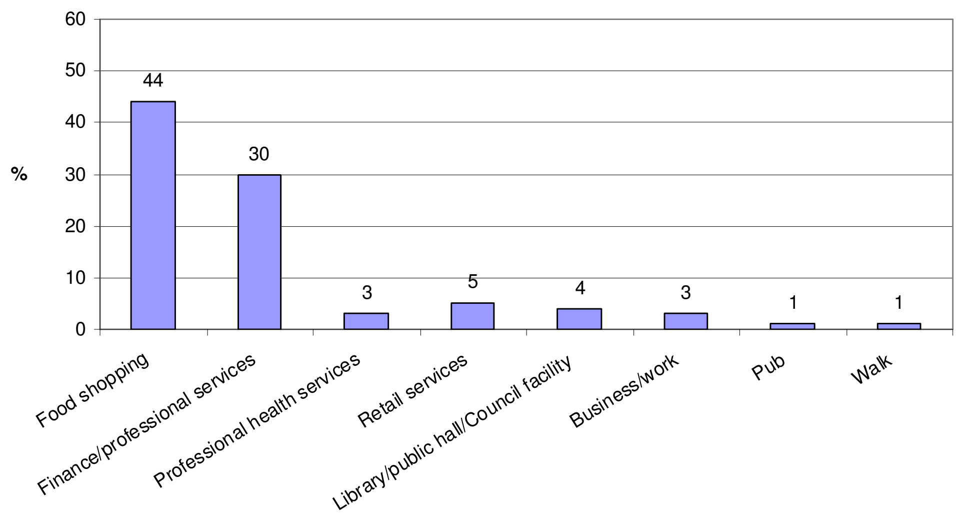


Overall usage

7.3 Residents were shown a list of purposes for visiting the town centre and asked to select **one main** purpose for their normal visit during the day. The most common responses are shown below. The key main purposes were food shopping (44%) and financial/professional services (30%).

Figure 7.3 Main purpose for normal visit

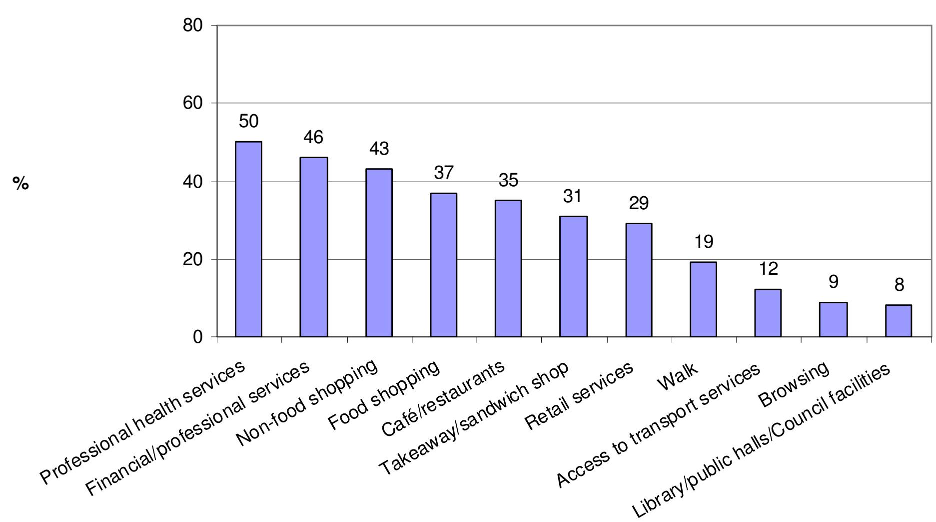
What is your MAIN reason for normally visiting this town centre? Base 76



7.4 Residents were then asked to select any **other purposes** for a normal visit and this generated a broader set of responses. The most common other purposes were: professional health services e.g. doctor, dentist (50%), financial/professional services e.g. bank, solicitor (46%), non-food shopping (43%) and food shopping (37%).

Figure 7.4 Other purposes for normal visit

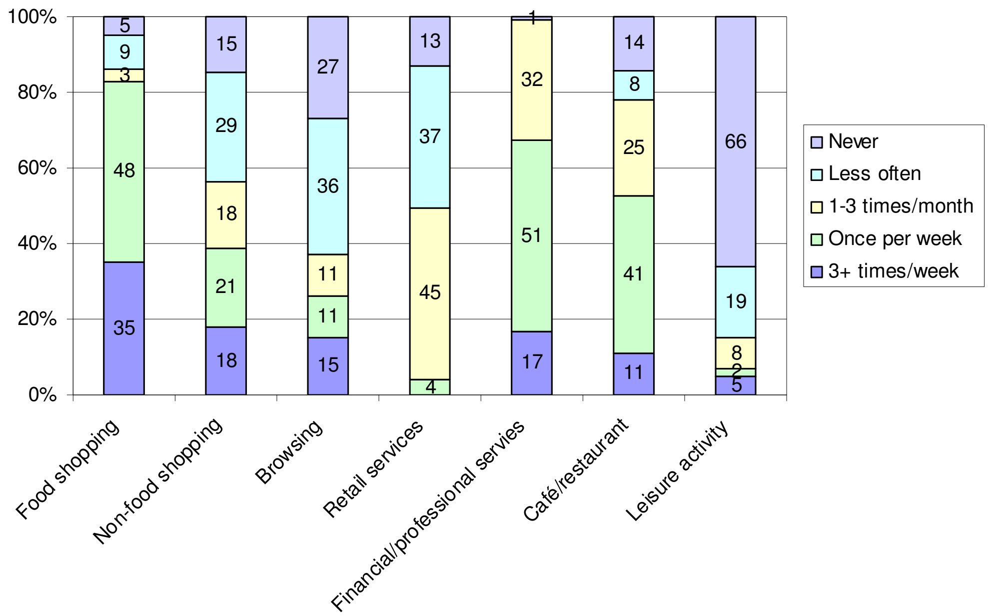
What OTHER reasons do you have for normally visiting this town centre? Base 76



7.5 A list of types of shopping and services was shown and residents were asked how often, if at all, they visited the town centre for each. The most frequent usage was for shopping; 35% making at least 3 visits per week for food shopping and 18% for non-food shopping. Financial/professional services were used at least once a week by 68% of residents and weekly usage of café/restaurants was 52%.

Figure 7.5 Frequency of usage

How often do you normally visit this town centre during the day? Base 76



7.6 Figure 7.6 shows how frequency of resident visits to the town centre has changed over the last year. Usage is very stable, with 94% of respondents claiming no change in usage over the last year.

Table 7.6 Change in frequency of visits

How has the frequency of your visits to this town centre changed over the last year?

Base: 76	
	%
More often	0
About the same	94
Less often	6

7.7 Over half of residents (58%) normally drive to the town centre and 29% normally walk.

Table 7.7 Method of transport to travel to town centre

How do you normally travel to the town centre?

Base: 76	
	%
Car	58
Walk	29
Bus	15
Taxi	1

7.8 15% of residents normally spend less than 1 hour when visiting the town centre and a further 53% spend between 1-2 hours. NB: for those that work in the centre, this question referred to the period spent on shopping or using a service.

Figure 7.8 Length of time shopping/using a service

How long do you normally spend in the town centre?

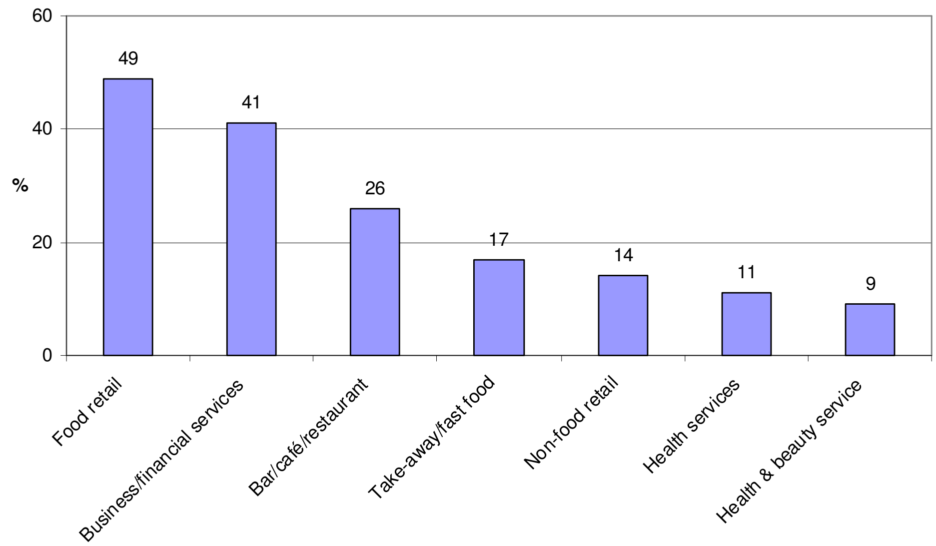
Base: 76	
	%
Less than 1 hour	15
1-2 hours	53
3-4 hours	22
5-6 hours	7
All day	3

Purchase behaviour

7.9 The types of shopping or services respondents used on their last visit to the town centre are shown in Figure 7.9. The most common purchase was food shopping (49%) and business/financial services (41%).

Figure 7.9 Types of shopping of services used

What did you buy/what services did you use? Base 75



7.10 For each of the types of shopping or services used on their last visit, residents were asked their spend, using a range of spend categories. Taking the mid-point values from the various categories of expenditure (and assuming 'more than £100' as £100), the average spend per shopping/service type has been calculated, based on those who gave an answer. Average spend was highest on business/financial services and food shopping. The total average spend in the town centre on residents' last visits was £57.37.

Table 7.10 Average spend on last occasion

Business and Financial Services	£21.38
Bar/Cafe/Restaurant	£4.55
Retail (non-food)	£2.05
Retail (food)	£21.61
Takeaway and Fast Food	£1.83
Health Services (e.g. dentist, opticians)	£1.29
Health and Beauty Services (e.g. hairdresser, nail salon)	£4.64
Total	**£57.37**

Reasons for usage of town centre

7.11 Table 7.11 shows the key reasons residents gave for using this town centre rather than somewhere else. This was asked as an open-ended question and respondent verbatim answers were coded into categories. The key category was that of convenience (89%). A selection of verbatim comments is shown in Table 7.11.1 and full listing of comments can be found in the appendices.

Table 7.11 Reasons for using town centre

Why do you use the shops/services in this town centre as opposed to using somewhere else?

Base: 68	
	%
Convenience generally	89
Closeness to work	8
Visit specific shop/service	5
Positive to shops/service	1
General positive comments	1
Support shops/services	2

Table 7.11.1 Example of verbatim reasons for using town centre

Reasons to use	**Town Centre**
Convenience generally	"It's handy, in and out quick" "It's most convenient for me" "It's okay if you're in a hurry, quick access" "It's my local shops" "Within walking distance" "It's where I live, it's convenient for me"

7.12 Residents were shown a list of reasons for visiting the town centre and asked to select **one main** reason for their last visit and then **other reasons.** The most common main reason was because it was closest main shopping area (73%). Other reasons showed a slightly broader range including: quality of cafes/restaurants (14%) and to go to a specific shop/service (13%).

Table 7.12 Reasons to visit

What is your MAIN reason for using shops or services in this town centre?
What OTHER reasons for using shops or services in this town centre?

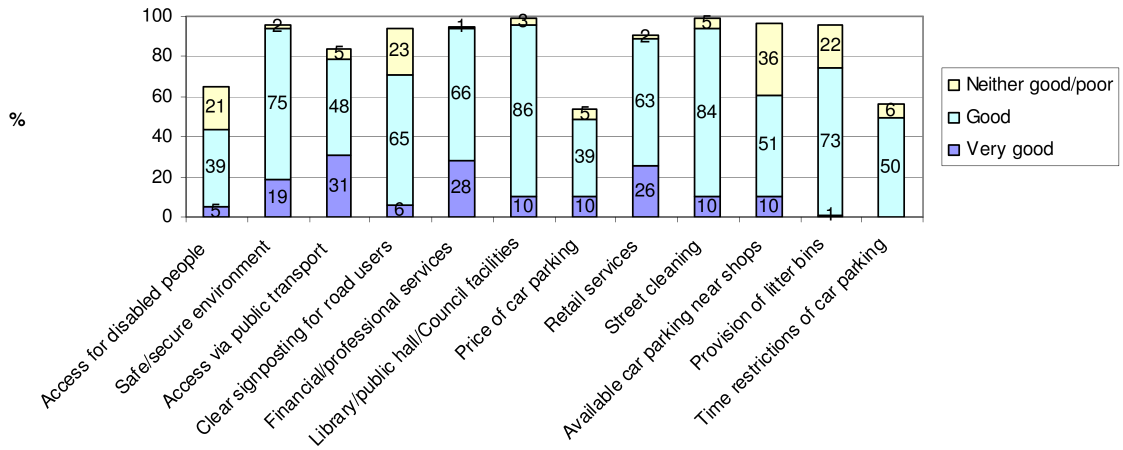
Base: 76	Main reason	Other reasons
	%	%
Closest main shopping area	73	17
To go to a specific shop/access a specific service	8	13
Good car parking	6	8
Variety of shops/services	4	9
Quality of café/restaurants	1	14
Positive feel to town centre	1	8
Good public transport	0	5
Attractive/well-maintained town centre	0	3
Quality of shops/services	0	4

Attitudes and factors that would encourage usage

7.13 A list of features about the town centre was shown and residents asked to rate each one as: very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor or very poor. Table 7.13 shows those statements which were most commonly rated as **very good or good.** Features which were commonly rated as **very good** were: access via public transport (31%), financial/professional services (28%) and retail services e.g. hair dresser, shoe repair (26%). Features commonly rated as **good** included: library/public hall/council facilities (86%), street cleaning (84%) and safe/secure environment (75%).

Table 7.13 Attitudes towards town centre

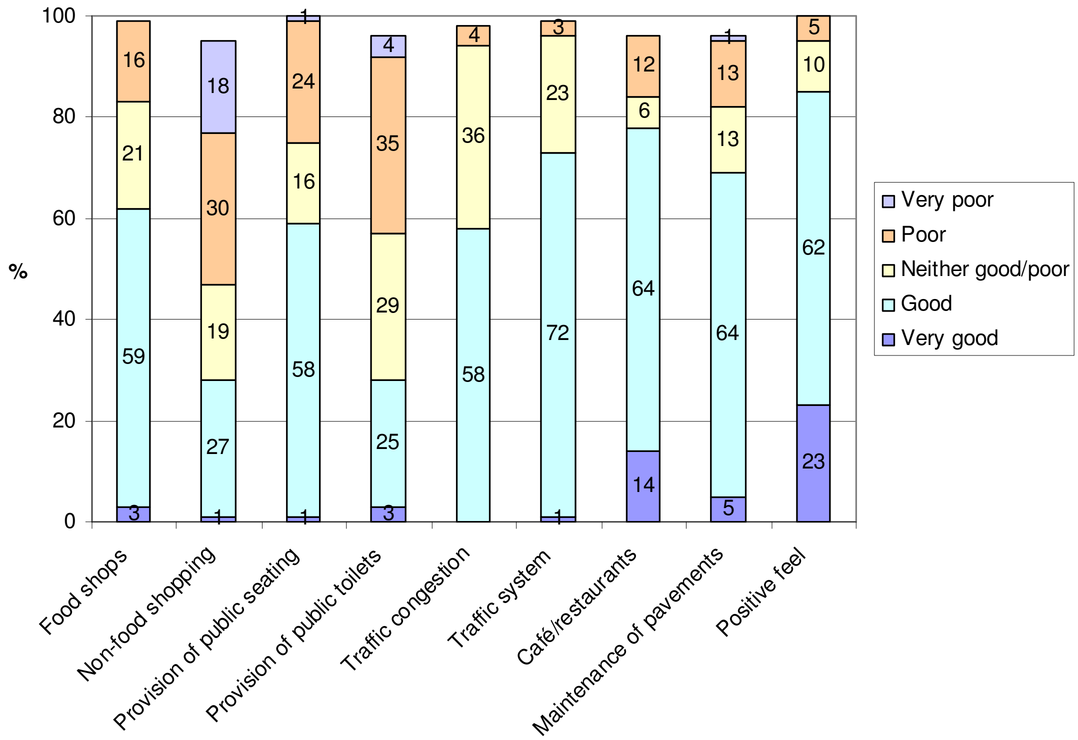
How do you rate this town centre with regard to the following? Base 76



7.14 Table 7.14 shows features most commonly rated as poor or very poor; the feature rated most commonly as **very poor** was non-food shopping (18%). Features rated most commonly as **poor/very poor** included: non-food shopping (48%), provision of public toilets (39%) and provision of public seating (25%).

Table 7.14 Attitudes towards town centre

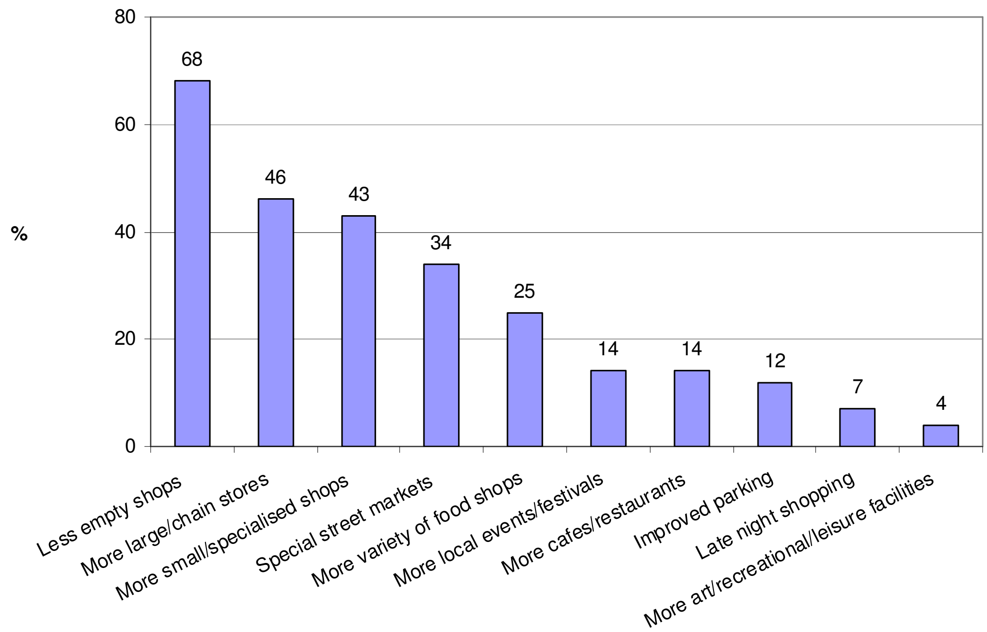
How do you rate this town centre with regard to the following? Base 76



7.15 Table 7.15 shows the changes to town centre which would encourage residents to use the town centre more often; residents were asked to provide up to three changes from a list and the most common responses are shown below. The most popular suggested changes were: less empty shops (68%), more large/chain stores (46%) and more small/specialised shops (43%).

Table 7.15 Changes to attract more usage of town centre

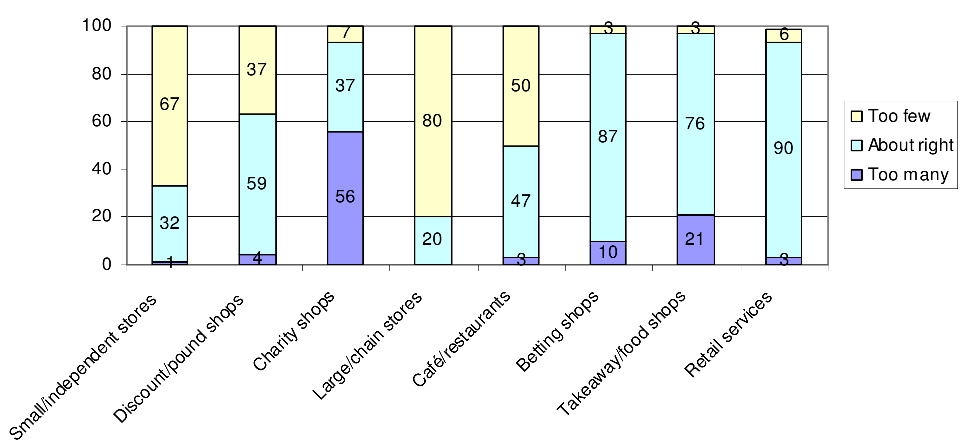
Which, if any, of these changes to shops/service would encourage you to use this town centre more? Base 76



7.16 Residents were shown a list of different types of outlets in the town centre; for each they were asked if there were: too many, about right or too few**.** Over half (56%) felt there were **too many** charity shops, 80% felt there were **too few** large/chain shops and 67% **too few** small, independent shops.

Table 7.16 Attitudes towards types of outlets

What do you think about the number of these types of outlets in this town centre? Base 76



7.17 Table 7.17 shows the spontaneous categories which residents felt would improve their shopping experience in the town centre. This was asked as an open-ended question and respondent verbatim answers were coded into categories. The key category was that of improvements to shops/services (81%). A selection of verbatim comments is shown in Table 7.17.1 and full listing of comments can be found in the appendices.

Table 7.17 Improvements to shopping experience

What do you think would improve your shopping experience in this town centre?

Base: 68	**%**
Improvements to shops/services	81
Fill empty shops	26
Less traffic/improvements	1

Table 7.17.1 Example of verbatim reasons for improving town centre

Reasons to use	**Town Centre**
Improvements to shops/services	*"A Primark or similar store and a good restaurant"* *"Needs a big supermarket and less empty shops, town centre is an eye sore"* *"We need clothes shops, children's shops, toy shops, shoe shops"* *"More food shops, more big chain stores and woman's clothes shop"* *"Bigger variety of high street stores"*
Fill empty shops	*"Could be doing with more shops, more and more are closing down at centre"* *"Do something about all the empty shops, making place look tatty"* *"Fill empty shops with a variety of new shops"* *"Less empty shops, it's beginning to look really bad, more types of shops needed"*

7.18 Residents were shown a list of locations for different types of shopping and services and asked to select their **one main** location for each. Both Ayr, Heathfield and Girvan town centre were primary locations for food shopping, Ayr town centre was the primary location for non-food shopping and Girvan town centre was the primary location for services and cafes/restaurants.

Table 7.18 Main location for shopping and service types

Which of these shopping areas is your MAIN location for each of these types of shopping or services? Base 68

	Food	Non-food	Financial services	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Ayr, Heathfield	49	26	2	2	0
Ayr, Town Centre	6	46	4	19	33
Girvan, Town Centre	**45**	**22**	**94**	**74**	**61**

7.19 Residents were then asked to select any **other locations** for shopping and services and responses are shown in Table 7.19. Ayr town centre is a key support location for use of services.

Table 7.19 Other locations used for shopping and services

Which of these shopping areas are OTHER locations for each of these types of shopping or services? Base 68

	Food	Non-food	Financial service	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Ayr, Heathfield	14	8	21	0	7
Ayr, Town Centre	13	19	41	21	39
Girvan Town Centre	35	38	7	14	12
Irvine Rivergate	3	9	0	0	1
Kilmarnock Town Centre	5	13	0	3	3
Glasgow City	2	12	0	0	10
Silverburn	2	8	0	0	2

7.20 Residents were given a list of reasons why they might mainly use a shopping or service location and asked to select as many as applied. For all types of shopping and services, closest main shopping area was the key reason to use a location; also variety of shops/services for food shopping (55%) and for non-food shopping (76%).

Table 7.20 Reasons to use main location for shopping and services

What are your reasons for using this location for this type of shopping/services? Base 68

	Food	Non-food	Financial services	Retail services	Café/ restaurant
	%	%	%	%	%
Closest main shopping area	45	22	83	59	45
Variety of shops and services	55	76	8	21	28
Quality of shops and services	9	11	7	17	10
Quality of cafes/restaurants	0	0	0	3	13
Good car parking	1	1	3	1	3
Good public transport	0	1	1	0	0

Evening usage of town centre

7.21 Of the 76 residents interviewed, 25% visited the town centre facilities in the evening and 75% did not. Those who did not most commonly gave the following reasons: no need/don't go out 50% and prefer to go elsewhere 42%.

7.22 The base of residents who visit Girvan Town Centre in the evening is too low to show numerical analysis for the purposes and frequency of visiting town centre in the evening. The key reason to visit was to visit pubs/bars/nightclubs and to a lesser extent for café/restaurants.

7.23 A list of features about the town centre in the evening was shown and residents asked to rate each one as: very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor or very poor. Statistical analysis cannot be conducted on the low base who answered this question. Features which were commonly rated as good/very good were: safe/secure environment, positive feel, access via public transport and attractive/well-maintained environment. Features which were commonly rated as poor/very poor were: good cafes/restaurants and variety of things to do in the evening.