

## Cleveleys Town Centre

### Description

Cleveleys is the largest of Wyre's four town centres, with its 273 retail, leisure and service units providing for 47,410 sq.m of commercial floorspace. The layout of the centre is linear and elongated; the main high street, Victoria Road West, is c. 700m long. This is bisected by the Blackpool to Fleetwood tramline, which runs north to south through the town centre.

As well as catering for a substantial residential catchment, the town centre is a seaside resort which attracts tourist trade. This dual function is reflected in its retail and service offers.

The Aldi supermarket at Crescent West provides a key anchor and is complemented by a range of smaller national multiple and independent retailers which, in combination, fulfil many of the day-to-day food shopping requirements of residents. Cleveleys also provides for a good variety of retail and financial & business services to meet the needs of the local community.

The tourist-focussed leisure uses are concentrated at the western edge of the centre, near Cleveleys' Plaza and Promenade. These include amusement arcades, cafés and restaurants, many of which are family friendly.



**Figure 1:** Cleveleys is an elongated centre arranged around Victoria Road West



**Figure 2:** The town centre attracts tourist trade associated with its seaside/promenade location



**Figure 3:** Street market stalls added to the diversity and vibrancy of the offer during our visit



**Figure 4:** A tramway runs north to south through Cleveleys and links it to Fleetwood and Blackpool

**Table 1 Cleveleys Town Centre Floorspace Composition**

GOAD Category	Floorspace at 2024 (sq.m)	Floorspace at 2024 (%)	Floorspace UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	18,380	38.8%	29.2%
Convenience	6,020	12.7%	15.6%
Financial & Business	3,330	7.0%	6.2%
Leisure	12,720	26.8%	26.7%
Retail Service	4,860	10.3%	7.4%
Vacant	2,100	4.4%	14.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47,410</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Composition of District centre based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

**Table 2 Cleveleys Town Centre Unit Composition**

GOAD Category	Units at 2024 (no.)	Units at 2024 (%)	Units UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	89	32.6%	26.3%
Convenience	21	7.7%	9.3%
Financial & Business	23	8.4%	8.3%
Leisure	65	23.8%	25.8%
Retail Service	55	20.1%	16.0%
Vacant	20	7.3%	14.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: District centre composition based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

## Uses

Cleveleys enjoys a strong convenience offer anchored by the Aldi on Crescent West, which was extended in 2020. Other national multiple food retailers with a presence in the town centre include Iceland, M&S Foodhall, Heron Foods and Sainsbury's Local. Complementing these national brands is a variety of independent and specialist food retailers, which add character and diversity. These include bakers, butchers, confectioners, convenience stores, a fishmonger, and a greengrocer. Overall, we consider that Cleveleys performs well in meeting the everyday grocery shopping needs of its local catchment.

Cleveleys' proportions of comparison floorspace and units are high compared to national averages and the scale and variety of the offer exceeds comparable centres in Wyre. While the focus is on the lower or value end of the market, the town centre provides for a good number of non-food national multiples (all of which are located in the western half). These retailers include B&M, Bonmarché, Boots, Card Factory, Home Bargains, New Look, Peacocks, Poundland, Superdrug and a number of charity shops.

The town centre's independent non-food shops cater for a wide range of the day-to-day needs of the residential catchment, including clothing and footwear, as well as providing for tourist trade through gift shops and other specialist stores. Millstores, an independent department store which opened in the centre's former Wilko unit in May 2024, represents a positive

repurposing of vacant floorspace to create a destination retailer that is unique to the town centre.

Adding to the town's retail variety is Cleveleys Market, which is held every Wednesday between Easter and October (weather permitting) and which was trading on the day of our site visit. The outdoor market provides a platform for smaller and local traders selling a range of food and non-food products, many of which are homemade, with appeal to both residents and visitors. We understand from stakeholder discussions that there is an ambition to expand and relocate the current market, which is held near the Plaza on Victoria Road West, into a more permanent, sheltered location.

The majority of leisure units in Cleveleys are occupied by food and beverage operators, with the town centre containing numerous bars, cafés, fast food and takeaway outlets, public houses and restaurants. While these uses provide for a good number of the requirements of local residents, they also reflect Cleveleys' function as a visitor attraction based on its seaside location.

Tourist-focussed leisure uses are concentrated at the western edge of the centre, near Cleveleys' Plaza and Promenade. These include amusement arcades, fish and chip shops, and numerous other cafés and restaurants, many of which cater to families. Nonetheless, the options for overnight visitor accommodation are very limited. There are only two hotels within the Goad area of Cleveleys, both of which are independent.

While not located in the town centre itself, larger-format leisure uses are located a short distance to the north at Jubilee Leisure Park and Jubilee Gardens, which provide for a Vue Cinema, JD gym, public house, skatepark, greenspace and a boating/angling club. Moreover, in December 2024, permission was granted under reference 24/00555/FUL to allow for the use of the vacant former Pizza Hut restaurant in the Leisure Park as a café and the construction of three ancillary padel courts.

Retail services are well-represented in Cleveleys, with the proportion of occupiers in this category being almost three times the UK average (although these are predominantly small-scale units which results in a below-average share of floorspace). Health & beauty operators account for the majority of retail service traders (60.0%). However, the town centre also benefits from representation from a broad range of other service uses including opticians, pet groomers, photo processing, a post office, travel agents, undertakers, and vehicle repairs/servicing.

The variety of financial & business services is also better-than-average for a centre of Cleveleys' size (although again most of these units are small in scale). Importantly, the town centre contains three retail banks and one building society (Halifax, NatWest, Santander and Skipton Building Society). It also provides for accountants, insurance brokers, estate agents, solicitors, and printing and copying shops.

### Daytime/Evening Economy

Cleveleys town centre serves a dual function as both a shopping and service destination that fulfils the everyday needs of local residents, as well as a visitor attraction underpinned by a strong family-friendly leisure offer. Most operators trade between 9am and 6pm. However, some of the larger national multiples, including Aldi, have opening hours that extend into the evening. Collectively, the town centre's retailers and service uses act to drive and sustain high levels of footfall during the day.

The evening economy in Cleveleys is principally focussed on drinking and eating, whether than be on the premises or takeaway. There are some licensed bars, public houses and restaurants scattered throughout the town centre, although perhaps fewer than might be expected given its size and role. The advantage of the late-opening units being dispersed along the elongated high street is that various parts of the centre benefit from activity and footfall after daytime hours. The disadvantage, however, is that Cleveleys lacks a 'focal point' where these night-time uses are concentrated, which would help them to become mutually reinforcing and thus allow the town centre's evening economy to reach its full potential.

### Vacancies

Cleveleys boasts low vacancy rates compared to UK averages, particularly in terms of floorspace. Moreover, those vacancies that do exist are spread throughout the centre, with few concentrations or clusters, and generally reasonably well-maintained. These factors lessen the impact that the unoccupied units have on the appearance of the town centre and on perceptions of safety within it.

The largest vacancy within the centre is 6 Crescent West. This unit was previously occupied by the Ex-Catalogue discount retailer, which has since relocated to a smaller unit on Rossall Road within the town centre. The resulting empty premises are next door to another vacant unit, 9-11 Crescent West, and together they do form a prominent stretch of inactive frontage. Nonetheless, these units are close to the Aldi, which attracts high footfall, and the tramline, which help to ensure that this part of the centre still benefits from a feeling of activity and natural surveillance.

### Opportunity Sites

Whilst reoccupying and repurposing the vacant floorspace identified in Cleveleys is an important priority, as noted above, the town centre contains relatively few unoccupied units and most of these are small in scale. As a consequence, there are few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment within the centre boundary. Moreover, the town centre is surrounded by dense residential development which limits the options for significant edge-of-centre development.

Thus, we are unaware of any notable opportunity sites in Cleveleys identified in any development plan document or subject to any pending application for planning permission.

That said, the Cleveleys Town Centre Regeneration Framework does identify over 30 interventions (i.e. projects or actions) that it recommends to secure Cleveleys' future. Some of these relate specifically to the town

centre, whereas others are not place specific. The interventions include high street public realm enhancement works; improvements to public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure; and a range of measures targeted at supporting residents' sense of community, health and wellbeing.

### **Pedestrian Flows**

Wyre Council has provided footfall data for Cleveleys town centre collected by CommunityVision in 2022 and in the first nine months of 2023.

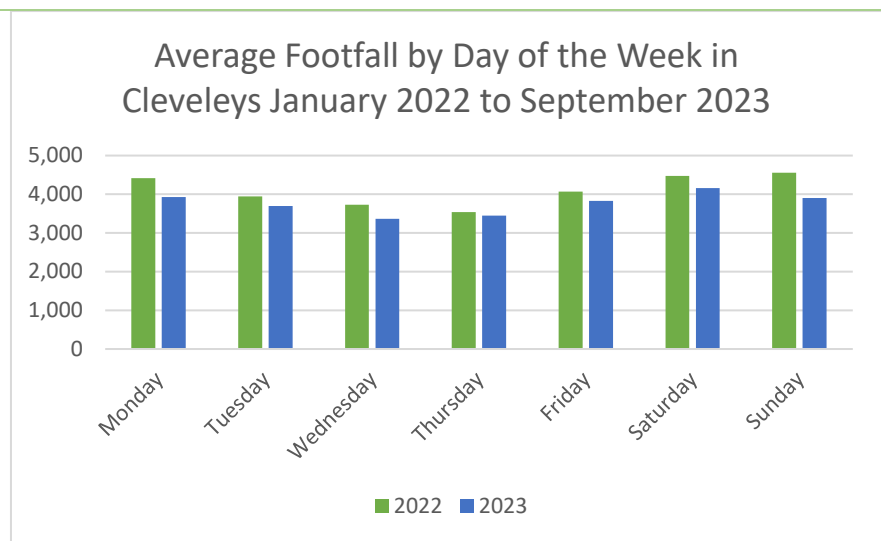
CommunityVision counted a total of 1,497,808 daily visits to Cleveleys in 2022, making it Wyre's busiest town centre by far. A further 1,026,915 visits were recorded between January and September 2023, which represents a marginal decrease of 0.4% compared the same period in 2022. The table below shows that Cleveleys experienced a high number of visits in the summer of 2022, whereas in 2023 the busiest months were January and August.



With regard to the average footfall on each day of the week, the table below shows that Cleveleys tends to experience a higher number of daily visits on Saturdays and Sundays. This finding is likely to reflect the orientation of a large proportion of the town's leisure offer towards families with children. Monday is another popular day, whereas the town centre tends to be quieter on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The daily average number of visitors was lower in 2023 than in 2022 on all days of the week. However, it should be noted that data was only collected for the first nine months of 2023, so that the figures below do not reflect the Christmas shopping period between October and December.





Our own fieldwork visit took place in August, during the school summer holidays, and also when Cleveleys' outdoor market was trading. We observed very high foot and car traffic in the western part of the town centre, especially near the seafront and Promenade. Despite the constant flow of car traffic in this area, the road did not appear to be a significant barrier to pedestrian flows, with visitors frequently using the zebra crossings and with double yellow lines limiting the number of parked vehicles (save for in clearly marked areas, including spaces reserved for taxis and disabled parking).

The Aldi store also generated significant levels of activity, with the car park being particularly well-used.

It was clear that the tramway, which bisects the centre from north to south, acted as a significant obstruction to pedestrian movement. Although crossing points are provided, the width of the track and the surrounding metal barriers create a large physical and perceived distance between the two 'halves' of Victoria Road West. Consequently, the eastern part of the centre was noticeably quieter than the west, although still moderately busy throughout.

### Accessibility

Cleveleys' location off the A587 makes it easily accessible by car from the north (Fleetwood) and south (Blackpool). From the east, the town centre is well-connected to the Thornton area via the B5412. There is an adequate level of car parking available at Rough Lea Road and Derby Road East and West, together with limited on-street parking at Victoria Road West.

In terms of accessibility by public transport, the centre is well-served by bus stops and the dedicated bus station on Rough Lea Road links it to destinations including Blackpool, Fleetwood, Lytham St Annes and Thornton. In addition, the Blackpool to Fleetwood tramline runs through the centre of the town, stopping adjacent to the high street.

Cycling provision in the centre is somewhat limited. There are some bike lanes along parts of Victoria Road West, but the busyness and narrowness

of the road in this location and the relative lack of dedicated cycle is likely to deter some users from using this form of transport.

Regarding pedestrian accessibility, including for those with impaired mobility, we have already noted the physical barrier and distance between the east and west of the centre created by the tramline. Another potential impediment to walkability is street clutter created by outdoor seating and market stalls, together with some parked cars.

Nevertheless, in general, the streets are wide and the topography fairly flat, with plenty of benches for those needing to stop and rest. As a result, on the day of our visit we observed numerous visitors with pushchairs and mobility scooters traversing the centre without apparent difficulty.

### **Perception of Safety**

Cleveleys' linear and legible layout ensures a high level of both natural and passive surveillance. While footfall was concentrated in the west of the centre at the time of our visit, we observed moderate amounts of pedestrian activity throughout, reducing any perceived threat of crime. The town centre therefore felt safe and secure.

As previously observed, there are a limited number of operators in the centre which open into the evening, with no particular concentrations. This may reduce the feeling of safety and activity at night.

### **Environmental Quality**

In 2010, Cleveleys benefitted from over £20m in public funding resulting in the installation of new sea defences and improvements to its Promenade to create more attractive seafront.

The remainder of the centre, however, would generally benefit from better maintenance of shopfronts and/or the replacement of poor-quality signage. The bus station has recently benefitted from a mural which represents the first phase of its enhancement but there are opportunities for further phases to improve its appearance and support its role as a key gateway/arrival point for visitors to Cleveleys. Moreover, while there is some street planting, the town centre is devoid of greenspace (although we note Jubilee Gardens lies a short distance to the north and offers some open space).

Nonetheless, the environmental quality of Cleveleys is generally appropriate for its form and function. There was little evidence of graffiti or litter on the day of our site visit, with bins provided throughout. Street furniture and planting, particularly in the western half of the centre, also add some visual interest. As a consequence, we consider that the town centre's environmental quality is reasonably good.

### **Conclusions**

In summary, Cleveleys town centre performs well in serving a dual function as both a shopping and service destination that fulfils the everyday needs of local residents, as well as a seaside visitor attraction underpinned by a strong family-friendly leisure offer. As a consequence, the centre enjoys

high footfall and low vacancy rates, which contribute to a general perception of safety and security during daytime hours.

The evening economy could be better developed, with the centre lacking a focal point for night-time uses that could ensure they become mutually reinforcing. Similarly, the Goad area of Cleveleys contains just two hotels, with the majority of overnight visitors staying in Blackpool and undertaking daytrips to the town centre.

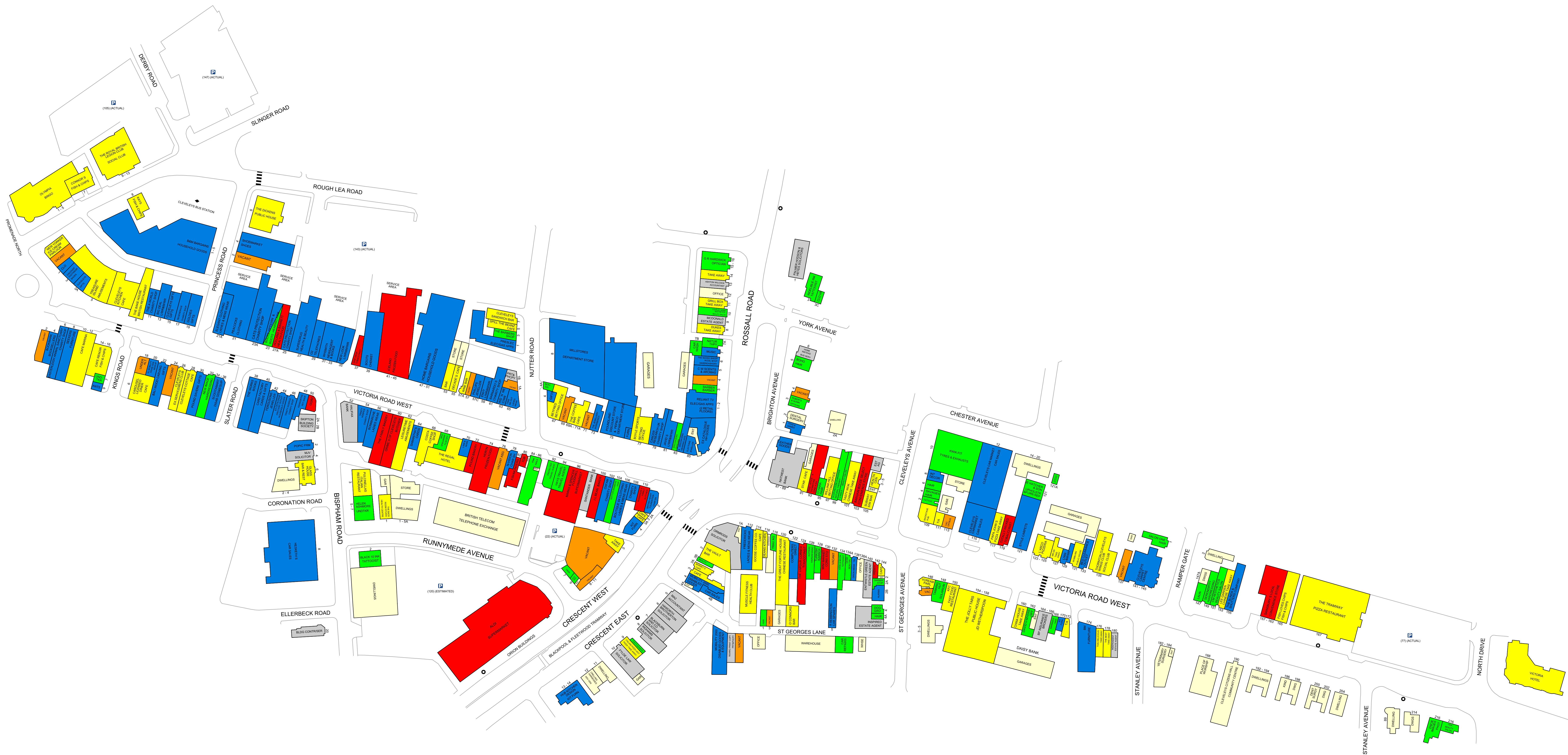
Accessibility is a key strength, particularly via public transport, with Cleveleys being well-served and benefitting from its own tram stop and bus station. However, the tramline does obstruct pedestrian movement between the west and east of the centre, and the elongated nature of the high street (which measures c. 700m) is another barrier to walkability.

While the town centre has benefitted from investment in its seafront and Promenade, many of its shopfronts are in need of maintenance and the bus station required further phases of enhancement. Nevertheless, the centre is generally free of graffiti and litter, and its linear layout, wide streets and flat topography make it traversable for those with impaired mobility.

Our overall conclusion is that Cleveleys is a reasonably vital and viable town centre.

---





Legend

- Comparison
- Convenience
- Financial & Business Service
- Retail Service
- Leisure Service
- Vacant
- Miscellaneous

50 metres



Experian Goad Plan Created: 13/11/2024  
Created By: Nexus Planning Ltd



## Fleetwood Town Centre

### Description

Fleetwood town centre is located in the north-west of the Wyre Borough. The Goad area of the centre is larger than that defined on the adopted Local Plan Policies Map, encompassing 230 retail, leisure and service units amounting to approximately 42,550 sq.m of commercial floorspace.

Fleetwood is largely linear in nature, being focussed around the main shopping and leisure thoroughfare of Lord Street and with secondary uses located around Poulton Road and North Albert Street.

An Asda superstore located on Cop Lane, in the southeast of the defined centre, provides a key convenience anchor and draws trade from a broad catchment including parts of the Blackpool local authority area. Fleetwood Market is another important use which adds diversity and vibrancy to the town centre's retail and leisure offer.

Comparison provision is impacted by the town centre's proximity to Affinity Shopping Centre (Freeport), which lies less than 500 m to its south-east. Nonetheless, Fleetwood does provide for a variety of national multiples, as well as a range of independent retailers.



**Figure 1:** Lord Street, Fleetwood's primary retail and leisure thoroughfare, contains the highest proportion of national multiples



**Figure 2:** Poulton Road is a secondary shopping street which experiences lower footfall and is more focussed on independent operators



**Figure 3:** Fleetwood Market hosts over 250 stalls every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday



**Figure 4:** The Asda on Cop Lane anchors the centre and draws trade from a wide catchment

**Table 1 Fleetwood Town Centre Floorspace Composition**

GOAD Category	Floorspace at 2024 (sq.m)	Floorspace at 2024 (%)	Floorspace UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	7,410	17.4	29.2
Convenience	14,000	32.9	15.6
Financial & Business	1,750	4.1	6.2
Leisure	6,830	16.1	26.7
Retail Service	3,840	9.0	7.4
Vacant	8,720	20.5	14.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,550</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Composition of District centre based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

**Table 2 Fleetwood Town Centre Unit Composition**

GOAD Category	Units at 2024 (no.)	Units at 2024 (%)	Units UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	50	21.7	26.3
Convenience	24	10.4	9.3
Financial & Business	15	6.5	8.3
Leisure	42	18.3	25.8
Retail Service	44	19.1	16.0
Vacant	55	23.9	14.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: District centre composition based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

## Uses

Fleetwood's non-food shopping sector is impacted by its proximity to the Affinity Lancashire Outlet Shopping Centre (formerly Freeport), which lies less than 500m to the south-east of the defined town centre and which provides for numerous national multiple retailers of clothing/footwear and higher order goods. As a consequence, the proportions of comparison floorspace and units in the town centre are considerably lower than the relevant national averages.

Nonetheless, the town centre does include representation from a limited number of national multiples, concentrated on Lord Street, including Boots, Card Factory, Poundstretcher, Peacocks and charity shops such as Barnardo's and the RSPCA. These are primarily focussed at the lower or value end of the market and cater to the day-to-day needs of local residents.

The centre's non-food national multiples are complemented by a variety of independent and specialist shops, which are generally small in scale and which provide for a fairly broad range of goods including clothing, hardware and DIY products, electronics, flowers, gifts, pet products, second-hand goods, stationery, textiles, and toys.

Fleetwood enjoys a strong food retail offer anchored by the Asda superstore on Cop Lane in the south-east of the town centre, with support from smaller Heron Foods and Iceland supermarkets located on Lord Street. Asda alone measures 6,580 sq.m (47.0% of the centre's total

convenience floorspace). Consequently, Fleetwood's proportion of convenience floorspace is over three times higher than the national average.

The anchor national multiple foodstores are supplemented by a range of smaller convenience retailers scattered around Lord Street and Poulton Road. These are predominantly independent shops and cater to the day-to-day needs of Fleetwood's residents, with operators including bakers and confectioners, a butcher, convenience stores, a greengrocer and a delicatessen. Thus, while the proportion of convenience units is below the UK average, the town centre's offer is more than sufficient to provide for the main and top-up food shopping needs of both local residents and a wider catchment encompassing parts of the Cleveleys and Poulton settlements.

The Council-owned Fleetwood Market, sited on Victoria Street and Adelaide Street, makes an important contribution to the diversity and vibrancy of the centre. The historic market hall enjoys high levels of occupancy, hosting more than 250 stalls on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Its focus is on independent and often local traders selling a variety of products including fresh produce, baked goods and other delicacies, clothing and fabrics, handmade crafts, and vintage goods. These are supported by a number of food and drink operators. The Market is a longstanding visitor draw and serves as a destination for frequent coach trips from across the North West.

In recent years, the Market has benefitted from public funding (including grants from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Coastal Communities Fund) with the aim of improving its appearance and working environment in order to encourage more visitors and longer dwell times. Interventions have included the conversion of vacant flats on the upper floor of the building to create shared studio space for start-up businesses, the redevelopment the outdoor market to create new stalls and pop-up stalls for start-up businesses; and the creation of an outdoor entertainment space and new cultural activities.

A September 2023 report by the DLUHC found that the project had been 'a great success', creating 32 new jobs and supporting 120 businesses.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the works have stimulated further investment, including Fleetwood Market's designation as a Heritage Action Zone in 2020 (with an award of £1.7m to deliver public realm enhancements and other improvements) and the establishment of the Future Fleetwood partnership, which aims to support the economic development of the town centre.

Leisure provision in Fleetwood falls significantly below national averages in terms of both floorspace and the number of units, and the offer is somewhat lacking in diversity. Although there are some public houses, bars,

---

<sup>1</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 'Coastal Communities Fund: Round 5 Progress Report', <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coastal-communities-fund-round-5-progress-report/coastal-communities-fund-round-5-progress-report-england-accessible-version> [accessed 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025].

---

restaurants and especially takeaways scattered around the town centre, both the quantity and variety are below what one would expect for a centre of this size. There are few national multiples – with Subway, Wetherspoon, and betting shop operators such as Ladbrokes being the primary exceptions – and the balance of operators is tipped towards the lower end of the market. Our stakeholder discussions identified a gap in the town centre market for family-friendly restaurants, particularly those which open into the evenings.

The town centre contains a Halifax bank<sup>2</sup> and a reasonably strong range of other financial & business service operators, including accountants, pawnbrokers, estate agents and solicitors. Although the floorspace dedicated to financial & business services uses is around half that found in a typical UK centre, the number of such units is in line with the national average. This reflects the propensity of these operators to trade from smaller-scale units.

Fleetwood's retail services provision is predominantly focussed on the health & beauty sector, which accounts for almost two thirds (65.9%) of its units. However, the town centre also caters to a good variety of other day-to-day needs including dry cleaners and laundrettes, funeral directors, opticians, pet grooming, petrol filling station, post office, photo studio and travel agents. While the proportion of floorspace dedicated to these uses is below the national average, this is a reflection of the small size of most of these traders in Fleetwood. In terms of units, provision is far above the UK average.

#### Daytime/Evening Economy

Fleetwood's daytime economy is underpinned primarily by its convenience retail and service offers, with the Asda superstore playing a particularly important role. Asda attracts customers from a wide catchment, including parts of the Blackpool local authority area. It operates until midnight on weekdays and until 10 PM on Saturdays, bringing some activity to the centre beyond typical daytime hours. However, the fairly poor connectivity between the Asda frontage and Lord Street limits the benefits for the rest of the town centre. Most of the remaining retail and service traders in Fleetwood operate during regular business hours.

On its trading days, Fleetwood Market serves as a major daytime attraction, drawing coach trips and other visitors from across the North West. This creates opportunities for linked trips between the market and the rest of the town centre, although the number of such trips appears to be limited in practice.

The evening economy is somewhat underdeveloped for a town centre of Fleetwood's size, which impacts upon both footfall and perceptions of safety after dark. The relatively few public houses that do exist are scattered

<sup>2</sup> NB: Halifax announced in January 2025 that it will close its Fleetwood branch in June 2025, and that there are plans for 'a Banking Hub in this area', <https://www.halifax.co.uk/helpcentre/everyday-banking/banking-near-you/branch-closures.html> [accessed 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025].

around the centre, though with a small cluster around the corner of London Street and Lord Street. There are also some restaurants and takeaways that operate during the evenings, although these are not concentrated in any particular area.

Stakeholder discussions and our own fieldwork observations identified a gap in Fleetwood's leisure sector, in particular, for family-friendly restaurants. Such establishments would not only diversify the current offer but also encourage trade and footfall in the evenings.

### **Vacancies**

Fleetwood suffers from high vacancy rates both in terms of units and floorspace, with both measures being well above UK averages.

The largest vacancy within the Goad area is the former Victoria Bingo Hall on Poulton Road (860 sq.m gross), although we note that this unit lies outside the defined town centre boundary and is currently undergoing works to facilitate its change of use for gym and storage purposes (under permission reference 21/01273/FULMAJ).

The majority of vacant units within the town centre are small in scale, with 89% measuring less than 250 sq.m gross. These are dispersed throughout the centre, with small clusters at various junctions. Along North Albert Street in particular, vacant units are interspersed with dwellings and offices, causing relatively long stretches of inactive frontages which have an adverse impact on the look and feel of the northern part of the centre.

### **Opportunity Sites**

As noted above, Fleetwood has high proportions of vacant floorspace and some clusters of unoccupied units. It will be important moving forward to take advantage of opportunities to reconfigure and repurpose this empty space, with the introduction of new family-friendly food and drink uses being a potential priority.

However, given the small size of most vacancies in Fleetwood, there are relatively few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment within the town centre boundary. The Council's Fleetwood Regeneration Framework identifies the edge-of-centre Fleetwood Dock and Marina as a potential opportunity site. This 7.5ha site is allocated in the adopted Wyre Local Plan for a mix of uses including housing, non-retail commercial, leisure, tourism and employment. The site was acquired from Associated British Ports by Fox Group in March 2024. Fox Group's intention appears to be to keep the land as a working port but also to provide for the 'enhancement of existing uses associated with the location, which are generally limited to commercial, employment, leisure and residential uses'.<sup>3</sup>

More broadly, in December 2024, Wyre Council approved the Fleetwood Waterfront Leisure Masterplan 2024. While the waterfront lies outside the town centre itself, the document outlines four key projects which are aimed at boosting tourism and the local economy, and which are therefore likely

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.foxjacksonports.co.uk/fleetwood/> [accessed 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025].

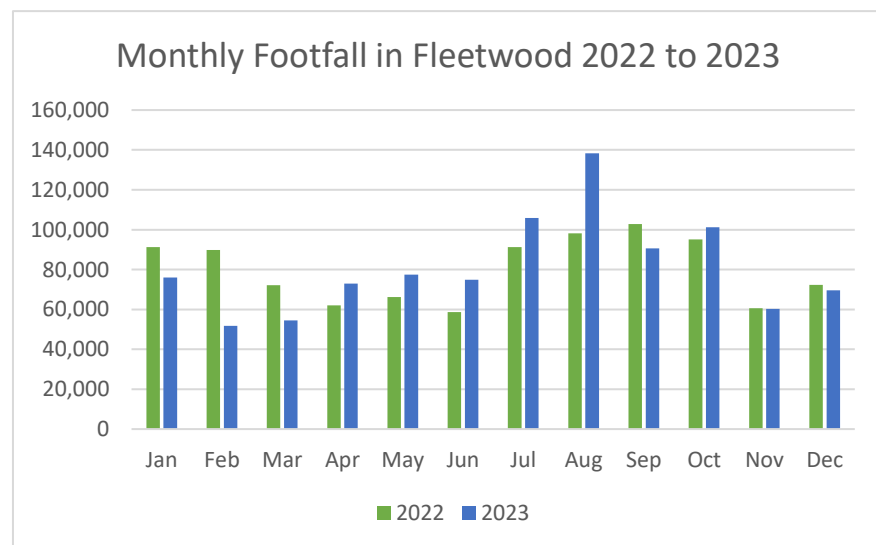


to generate spin-off benefits for the town centre. The four key projects comprise the redevelopment of Marine Hall, the refurbishment of Fleetwood Leisure Centre, improvements to the public realm and reconfiguration of the promenade, and the development of a 'beach huts' accommodation offer.

### **Pedestrian Flows**

Wyre Council has provided footfall data for Fleetwood town centre collected by CommunityVision in 2022 and 2023.

CommunityVision counted a total of 960,711 daily visits to Fleetwood in 2022 and 973,619 visits in 2023, representing a moderate year-on-year increase of 12,908 visits or 1.3%. The table below shows that Fleetwood experienced more visits in the summer of 2023 compared to the year before, with August 2023 in particular being a busy month.

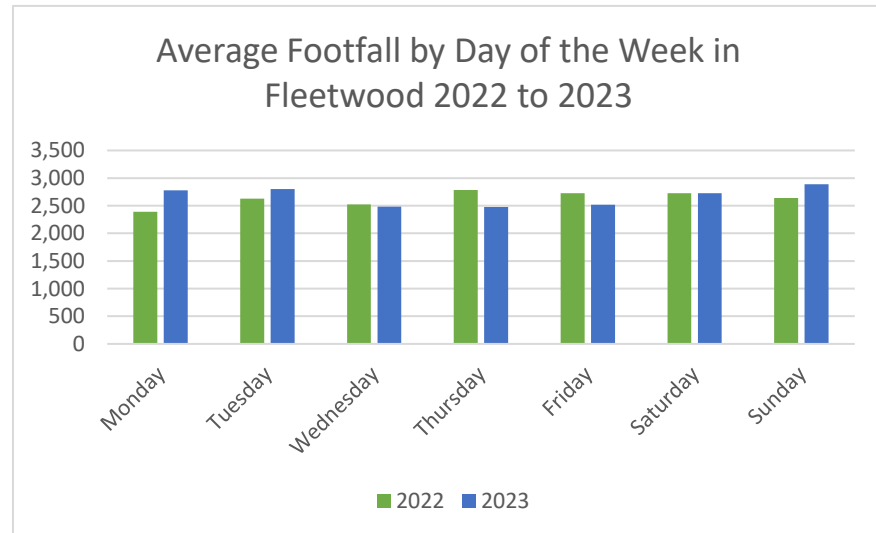


Our own site visit to Fleetwood took place in August 2024 during the school summer holidays. We observed that Fleetwood benefitted from high footfall, especially around Lord Street, although previous data suggest that the high street was uncommonly busy at this time. In contrast, the northern part of the centre, especially North Albert Street, was much quieter on the day of our visit.

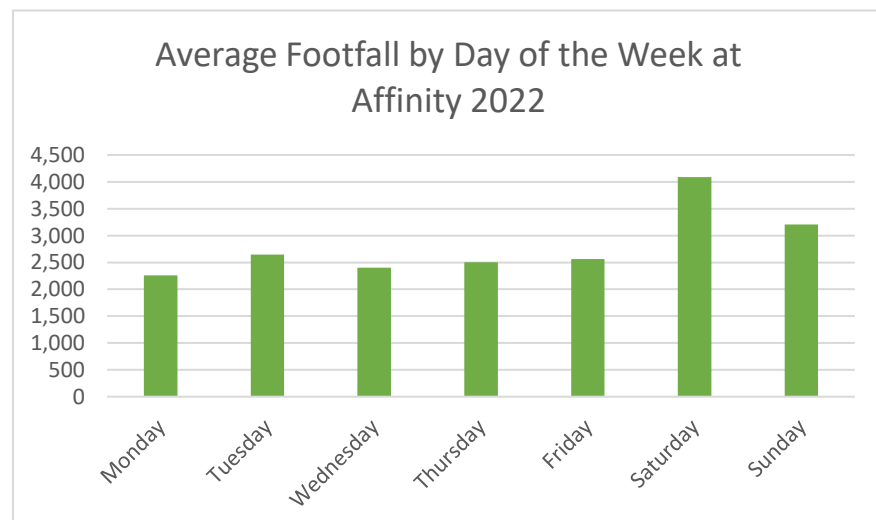
With regard to pedestrian flows, while the Asda superstore appeared to be trading exceptionally well, with most visitors arriving by car, we observed few linked trips between the supermarket and the remainder of the town centre. While there are some direct pedestrian linkages, these are generally poor and the Asda store is oriented away from the rest of the centre, which increases the feeling of separation.

While stakeholder discussions highlighted the popularity of Fleetwood Market and its role as a significant visitor draw, there was a suggestion that this activity has not resulted in a high number of linked trips to the rest of the town centre. The Market was not trading on the day of our site visit, but the historic footfall data provided by the Council appears to support this conclusion.

The table below shows the average daily visitor counts in Fleetwood town centre by day of the week between 2022 and 2023. Fleetwood Market trades on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, but the table shows that the rest of the town centre does not typically experience significant spikes in footfall on those days.



Similarly, the Council provided footfall data collected at the Affinity Shopping Centre. While the day-of-the-week data is only available for 2022, it suggests that Affinity typically attracts particularly high levels of footfall on Saturdays and Sundays. The fact that the town centre footfall does not also experience significant spikes on these days reinforces the point raised in stakeholder discussions that poor connectivity between Affinity and the centre results in few linked trips between the two locations.



#### Accessibility

Although it experiences some traffic congestion at peak times, Fleetwood town centre is fairly accessible by car via the A587 and benefits from ample free and paid car parking. Coach parking spaces to the east and south of the centre provide for Market visitors.

Accessibility by public transport is also good. Bus stops located along Lord Street offer frequent services to locations including Blackpool, Preston and Affinity. The tramway running through the town centre serves a linear route connecting Fleetwood Ferry in the north to Blackpool and Starr Gate in the south.

While the tramway can create something of a physical barrier, Fleetwood's linear layout and relatively flat topography make the centre easily navigable, including for those with mobility impairments. The town centre also provides for plentiful benches and cycle parking to encourage pedestrian and cycle accessibility.

### Perception of Safety

As noted above, Fleetwood was reasonably busy at the time of our site visit. Moreover, its linear layout provides for a good level of natural surveillance so that the town centre feels generally safe and secure during the day.

Nonetheless, the quieter areas of the centre, and particularly North Albert Street, do suffer from clusters of vacancies and non-commercial uses that result in stretches of inactive frontages which reduce perceptions of safety. We consider that this problem is likely to be compounded at night due to the relative lack of evening economy uses, albeit that street lighting is provided throughout the centre.

### Environmental Quality

Fleetwood's environmental quality is generally appropriate for its form and function, although we did observe some notable weak spots.

St Peter's Church is an attractive historic building that provides some greenspace, making it a particular highlight. There are numerous other listed buildings within the town centre boundary, generally dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In general, however, the streetscape is mixed, with little uniformity and significant variations in the quality and maintenance of frontages. Unfortunately, many of Fleetwood's shopfronts and vacant units are poorly maintained and dilapidated, especially towards the northern end of the centre, and would benefit from refurbishment.

On a positive note, we observed minimal graffiti or litter in the centre. Additionally, street furniture and planting enhance the overall environment.

### Conclusions

Fleetwood performs well in providing for the convenience retail and service needs of its residents, with its Asda superstore in particular providing an extensive offer and drawing expenditure from a substantial catchment. On its trading days, Fleetwood Market also constitutes a major draw, attracting coach trips and other visitors from across the North West.

However, the town centre's non-food shopping sector is impacted by its proximity to Affinity, which has resulted in a relative lack of national multiples and an offer that is largely skewed towards the lower or value end of the market. Improved connectivity between Affinity and the town centre

could help to generate linked trips to help support the vitality and viability of Fleetwood.

Another key challenge for Fleetwood is its high vacancy rates, which are above national averages in terms of both floorspace and units, and which consequently have a negative impact on the street-scene and wider centre environment. One beneficial way to repurpose some of the town centre's vacant retail floorspace could be the introduction of a more diverse range of uses to support the evening economy, especially family restaurants.

In recent years, Fleetwood has benefitted from substantial public-sector investment and partnership working through Future Fleetwood, including improvements to the appearance and working environment of the Market. More recent planned interventions, and particularly the projects outlined in the Fleetwood Waterfront Leisure Masterplan 2024, represent significant opportunities to build on and complement this work in order to secure Fleetwood's future resilience.

Taking all of these factors into account, our overall conclusion is that while the health of Fleetwood town centre is currently vulnerable, there are considerable opportunities to enhance its vitality and viability over the long term.

---

**Legend**

- Comparison
- Convenience
- Financial & Business Service
- Retail Service
- Leisure Service
- Vacant
- Miscellaneous



125 metres

Experian Goad Plan Created: 11/11/2024  
Created By: Nexus Planning Ltd



Legend

Comparison

Convenience

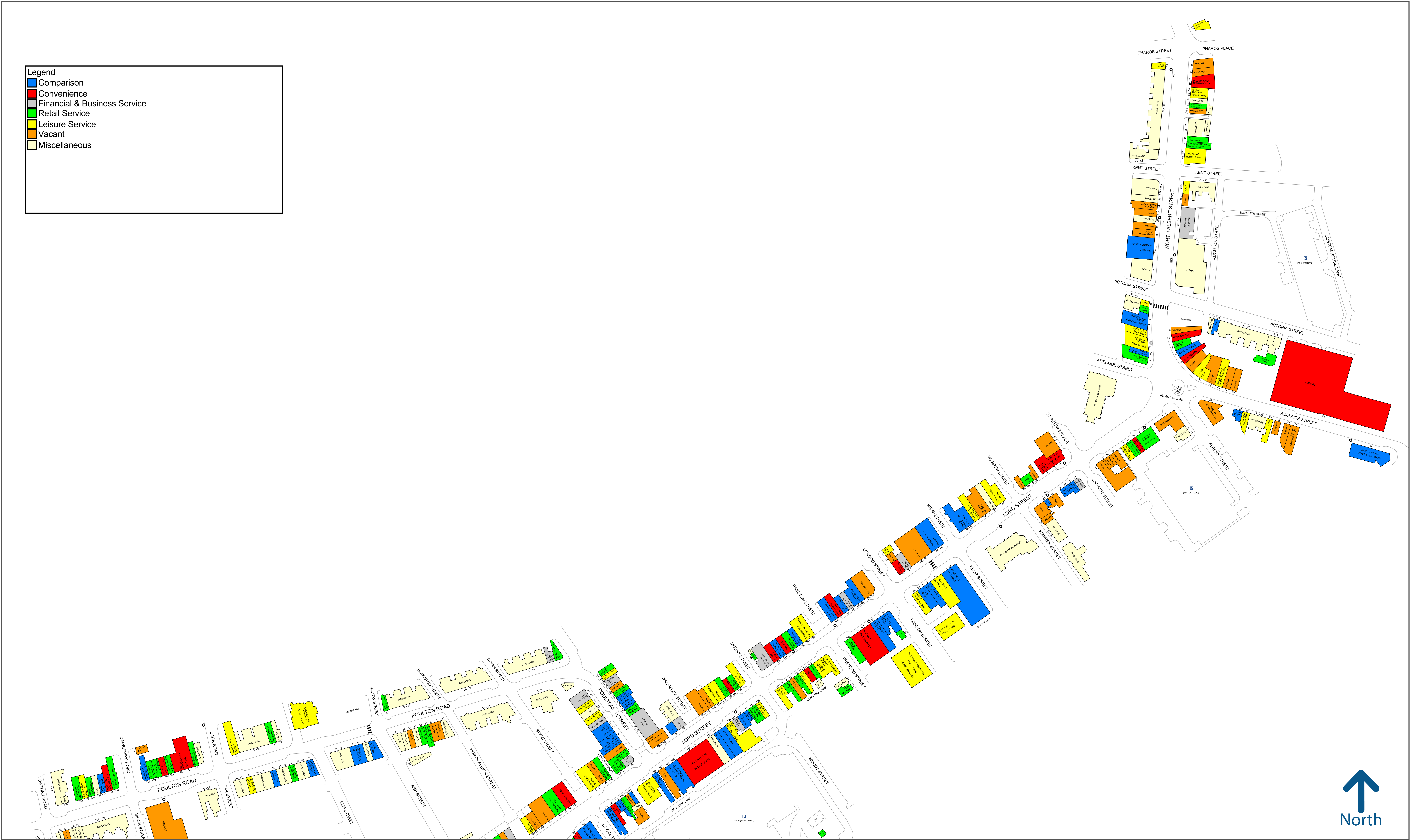
Financial & Business Service

Retail Service

Leisure Service

Vacant

Miscellaneous



50 metres

Experian Goad Plan Created: 11/11/2024  
Created By: Nexus Planning Ltd



Legend

Comparison

Convenience

Financial & Business Service

Retail Service

Leisure Service

Vacant

Miscellaneous



50 metres

Experian Goad Plan Created: 11/11/2024  
Created By: Nexus Planning Ltd



## Garstang Town Centre

### Description

Garstang is the only town centre in the eastern part of the Wyre district, being located along the B6430, and approximately 700m east of the A6. The layout of centre is compact and reflects its historic nature, with the majority of shopping and leisure facilities being focussed around Market Place/High Street. The Goad area of Garstang encompasses 136 retail, leisure and service units, amounting to approximately 21,300 sq.m of commercial floorspace.

Garstang has longstanding history as a market town and continues to host popular Indoor and Outdoor Markets. The remainder of the retail offer is strong and diverse, being anchored by its in-centre Booths and Aldi supermarkets and containing a good range of high-quality independent convenience and comparison operators.

Leisure provision in the town centre is primarily independent and focussed on food and drink. While there are some evening economy uses present, the centre would benefit from increased diversity in the form of more family-focussed facilities or the introduction of more upmarket restaurants to capitalise on the centre's affluent catchment.



**Figure 1:** Booths serves as a key anchor and provides the largest car park in the town centre



**Figure 2:** Garstang's high street is an attractive, historic street with several listed buildings



**Figure 3:** Features such as the town's war memorial contribute to its quaint character



**Figure 4:** The retail and service offers include numerous high-quality independent operators

**Table 1 Garstang Town Centre Floorspace Composition**

GOAD Category	Floorspace at 2024 (sq.m)	Floorspace at 2024 (%)	Floorspace UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	4,360	20.5%	29.2%
Convenience	7,420	34.8%	15.6%
Financial & Business	1,650	7.7%	6.2%
Leisure	4,960	23.3%	26.7%
Retail Service	2,240	10.5%	7.4%
Vacant	670	3.1%	14.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,300</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Composition of District centre based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

**Table 2 Garstang Town Centre Unit Composition**

GOAD Category	Units at 2024 (no.)	Units at 2024 (%)	Units UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	37	27.2%	26.3%
Convenience	13	9.6%	9.3%
Financial & Business	18	13.2%	8.3%
Leisure	28	20.6%	25.8%
Retail Service	32	23.5%	16.0%
Vacant	8	5.9%	14.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: District centre composition based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

## Uses

Garstang's convenience offer is strong and diverse, with its in-centre Booths and Aldi supermarkets providing key anchors and representing both the upper and lower or value ends of the food shopping market. The Goad area of the centre also contains the Sainsbury's on Park Hill Road, although this store lies outside of the defined town centre boundary.

These larger-format national multiples are supported by a One Stop convenience store and a range of smaller, independent food retailers including a butcher, two delicatessens, a fishmonger, and a health foods store.

Comparison provision is dominated by independent and boutique shops, many of which are of high quality. These cater to a broad variety of day-to-day needs, with Garstang's non-food retailers selling a range of goods including art, clothing and footwear, DIY goods and homewares, flowers, gifts, greeting cards, jewellery, pet products and pharmaceuticals.

Representation from national multiples is much more limited and largely comprises charity shops, although this is supplemented by the range of everyday non-food products available in the town's supermarkets. Overall, we consider that the comparison offer is good for a centre of Garstang's size and role.

Garstang's retail offer also reflects its heritage as a market town. The Indoor Market is held on Wednesday mornings and Thursdays, Fridays and

Saturdays in the historic Market House building located on High Street. This hosts a range of local convenience and comparison traders selling homemade and artisan products including baked goods, confectionery, deli goods, fresh meats, arts supplies and childrenswear.

In addition, the town centre hosts a popular Outdoor Market every Thursday which extends along the length of High Street. These street market stalls sell a diverse variety of goods including bedding, books, candles, cards, clothing and footwear, jewellery, plants, rugs and food products such as fresh fish, fruit and veg.

With regard to the leisure offer, the Garstang Sports and Social Club in the north of the centre has facilities for rugby, football, bowls, tennis and cricket. There are also two gyms within the town centre boundary. The remaining leisure operators are all food and beverage traders.

There are six pubs dotted around Garstang, and these are supplemented by a range of bars (three), cafés (four), takeaways (eight), and restaurants (four). Save for a Subway fast food outlet, all of these operators are independent. While the offer is of reasonably good quality, there could be some scope to increase its diversity through, for example, the addition of more family-focussed facilities or the introduction of more upmarket restaurants to capitalise on the centre's affluent catchment.

Garstang's service provision exceeds UK averages in terms of units (albeit that the small size of most of these operators means that the proportion of floorspace occupied by these users is below average). Health and beauty operators occupy 69% of the centre's retail service units, but there is also representation from a good range of uses including a drycleaner and launderette, opticians, undertakers, pet groomers, a post office and a travel agent.

Importantly, the financial and business service uses include four banks/building societies, these being Natwest<sup>1</sup>, Nationwide, Marsden Building Society and Yorkshire Building Society. This offer is rounded out by an accountant, building contractors, an employment agency, a financial advisor, solicitors and estate agents. This is considered to be a healthy scale and mix for a centre of Garstang's size.

#### **Daytime/Evening Economy**

During the day, Garstang fulfils a good number of the retail and service needs of local residents, with its anchor supermarkets also attracting a degree of trade from further afield. The supermarkets stay open until 10pm most evenings (and 4pm on Sundays), ensuring that there is usually some footfall and activity in the west and to the south of the centre until late evening. However, the majority of Garstang's shops and service traders are closed by 6pm.

<sup>1</sup> NB: Natwest announced in January 2025 that it will close its Garstang branch in June 2025, and that there are plans to replace this branch with a 'Banking Hub', <https://www.natwest.com/banking-with-natwest/other-ways-to-bank-with-natwest/natwest-branch-banking/branch-closures.html> [accessed 9th May 2025].

That said, the town centre's public houses, bars, restaurants, and takeaways do have operating hours that extend into the night. These are scattered around the high street and around Moss Lane in the west, which ensures that most parts benefit from at least some activity after daylight hours. However, these late-opening uses lack a focal point which would allow them to become more mutually reinforcing. Moreover, the aforementioned lack of diversity in the offer is a limitation which prevents the evening economy in Garstang from being as well-developed as it could be.

### Vacancies

Garstang enjoys very low vacancy rates compared to both the UK and Wyre averages, especially in terms of floorspace. Most of the vacancies are small in scale and reasonably well-maintained, which reduces their adverse impact on the look and feel of the centre.

We did, however, record a small concentration of five vacant units in the central part of High Street, which should be subject to ongoing monitoring to ensure that this floorspace is reoccupied or repurposed in future.

### Opportunity Sites

Given its historic nature (including a number of listed buildings), the relative density of the surrounding residential development, and the natural boundary formed by the River Wyre, there are few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment within and on the edge of Garstang.

The Council's Garstang Regeneration Framework identifies Cherestanc Square as a potential opportunity site. This public space lies to the immediate north-east of the Booths supermarket and is currently used for events and services such as mobile banking. While its useable area is modest, amounting to around 700 sq.m, the Regeneration Framework confirms that this is a substantial space (and in fact the largest space) in the context of Garstang.

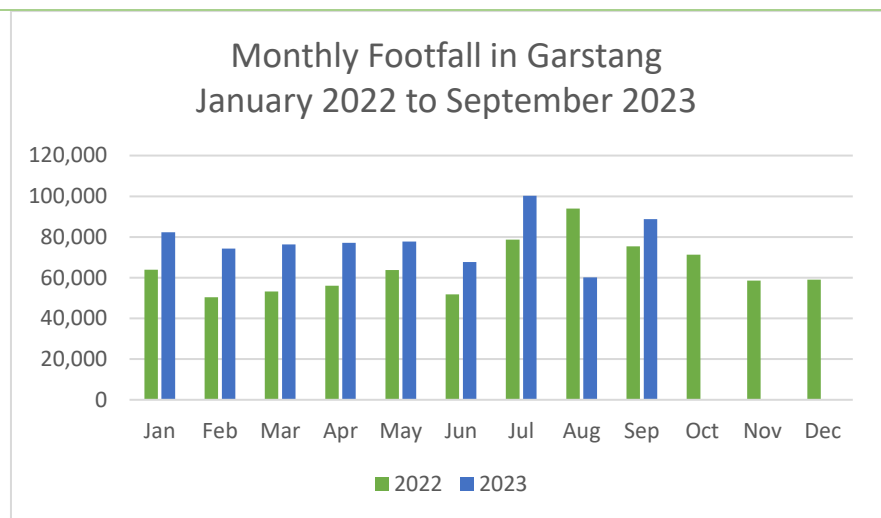
The Regeneration Framework states that:

**'The proposal is that Cherestanc Square is 'reimagined' as a space, potentially in combination with elements of frontage along Park Hill Road. The aim would be to create a more civic space with a clearer identity as part of the town centre, and more opportunity for commercial leisure uses.'**

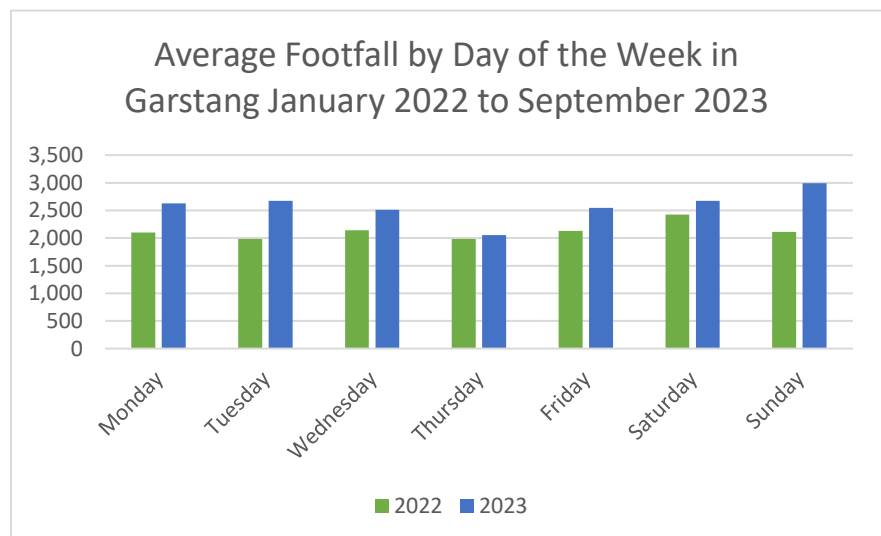
### Pedestrian Flows

Wyre Council has provided footfall data for Garstang town centre collected by CommunityVision in 2022 and in the first nine months of 2023.

CommunityVision counted a total of 775,764 daily visits to Garstang in 2022. A further 704,788 visits were recorded between January and September 2023, which represents a substantial increase of 117,851 visits, or 20.1%, compared to the same period in 2022. The table overleaf shows that Garstang experienced more visitors in each month of 2023 than it did in the equivalent month of 2022, with the exception of August. The busiest months were July and September of 2023.



With regard to the average footfall on each day of the week, the table below shows that Garstang tends to experience a higher number of daily visits on Saturdays and Sundays. Surprisingly, given that our stakeholders discussions identified the Outdoor Market as a popular attraction, Thursdays tended to be quieter on average in both 2022 and 2023.



Encouragingly, the daily average number of visitors was higher in 2023 than in 2022 on all days of the week. It should be noted that data was only collected for the first nine months of 2023, so that the figures do not reflect the Christmas shopping period between October and December.

Our own fieldwork visit took place in August, during the school summer holidays. We noted high footfall throughout the centre, particularly around the main shopping and leisure throughfare of Market Place/High Street. The Booth and Aldi supermarkets also drew significant car and foot traffic.

In general, the peripheral areas of the centre were quieter, including the enclosed spaces at Thomas Weind and Pringle Court, Croston Road to the



north, and Bridge Street to the south. Nonetheless, there were at least moderate levels of footfall throughout.

Given the compact nature of Garstang, we observed few significant barriers to pedestrian flows. The one exception is the Sainsbury's supermarket, which is separated from the town centre by a moderately busy B-road and roundabout. However, we note that this store lies outside the defined centre boundary and that there are pedestrian crossings located on Park Hill Road.

### Accessibility

Garstang's location along the B6430, and approximately 700m east of the A6, makes it easily accessible by car from the north (Lancaster) and south (Preston).

Lack of car parking in Garstang was raised as an issue during our stakeholder discussions. The town centre is served by a Council-run pay-and-display car park at the northern end of High Street (81 spaces) and, anecdotally, the Booths customer car park (190 spaces) is often used by town centre visitors. The latter, however, restricts maximum stays to three hours. Stakeholders reported difficulty in finding spaces on the Thursday market day or when sports events are held at the Garstang FC Sports Club. Research on parking capacity undertaken for the Council's Garstang Regeneration Framework found that:

**'...whilst overall town centre capacity may meet most current demand the lack of more longer stay spaces does deter longer visits to the town centre and leaves little headroom for further economic growth. The lack of long stay parking also affects staff working in the town centre who park on the surrounding streets.'**

In addition, the town centre lacks any dedicated parking spaces for buses, which potentially limits its ability to attract coach trips. The Regeneration Frameworks suggests that these issues could be addressed through a Town Centre Parking Strategy.

With regard to its accessibility by public transport, Garstang benefits from bus stops which provide regular services to nearby areas including Lancaster, Preston, and Blackpool. Unlike other town centres in Wyre, however, Garstang has no rail or tram links.

Aside from some bike parking stands outside the supermarkets, there is limited provision for cycling in the town centre. Moreover, Garstang's undulating topography and its historic street pattern, which is narrow and windy in places, may deter users from this form of transport.

Similarly, the topography and layout of the town centre can cause some challenges for pedestrian accessibility, and particularly for those with mobility impairments. These issues are compounded by street clutter such as A-board signs and outdoor seating and, on Thursdays, the stalls and activity associated with the Outdoor Market. In general, however, Garstang

is reasonably walkable, with Market Place/High Street only gently sloping and with its pavements and roads being well-maintained.

### Perception of Safety

Garstang is compact in nature and all parts enjoy at least a moderate level of footfall. As a consequence, the town centre has a good degree of both natural and passive surveillance and feels safe and secure during the day.

Given that footfall generally drops off after 6pm when the majority of retail and service traders are closed, the perceived threat of crime is likely to be increased at night. This is particularly true for the less well-lit parts of the centre, including the enclosed spaces at Thomas Weind and Pringle Court and the alleyways between High Street and Park Hill Road. As noted above, there is scope to increase the scale and diversity of Garstang's evening economy which would help to address this potential issue.

### Environmental Quality

The environmental quality of Garstang town centre is generally high. Much of the town centre falls within the Garstang Conservation Area, and there are a number of high-quality listed buildings which contribute greatly to the look and feel of the street-scene.

While some of the signage is out of keeping with the historic environment, the shopfronts are mostly well-maintained and, on the whole, make for a pleasant shopping environment. Moreover, there was no visible litter or graffiti in the town centre on the day of our visit

### Conclusions

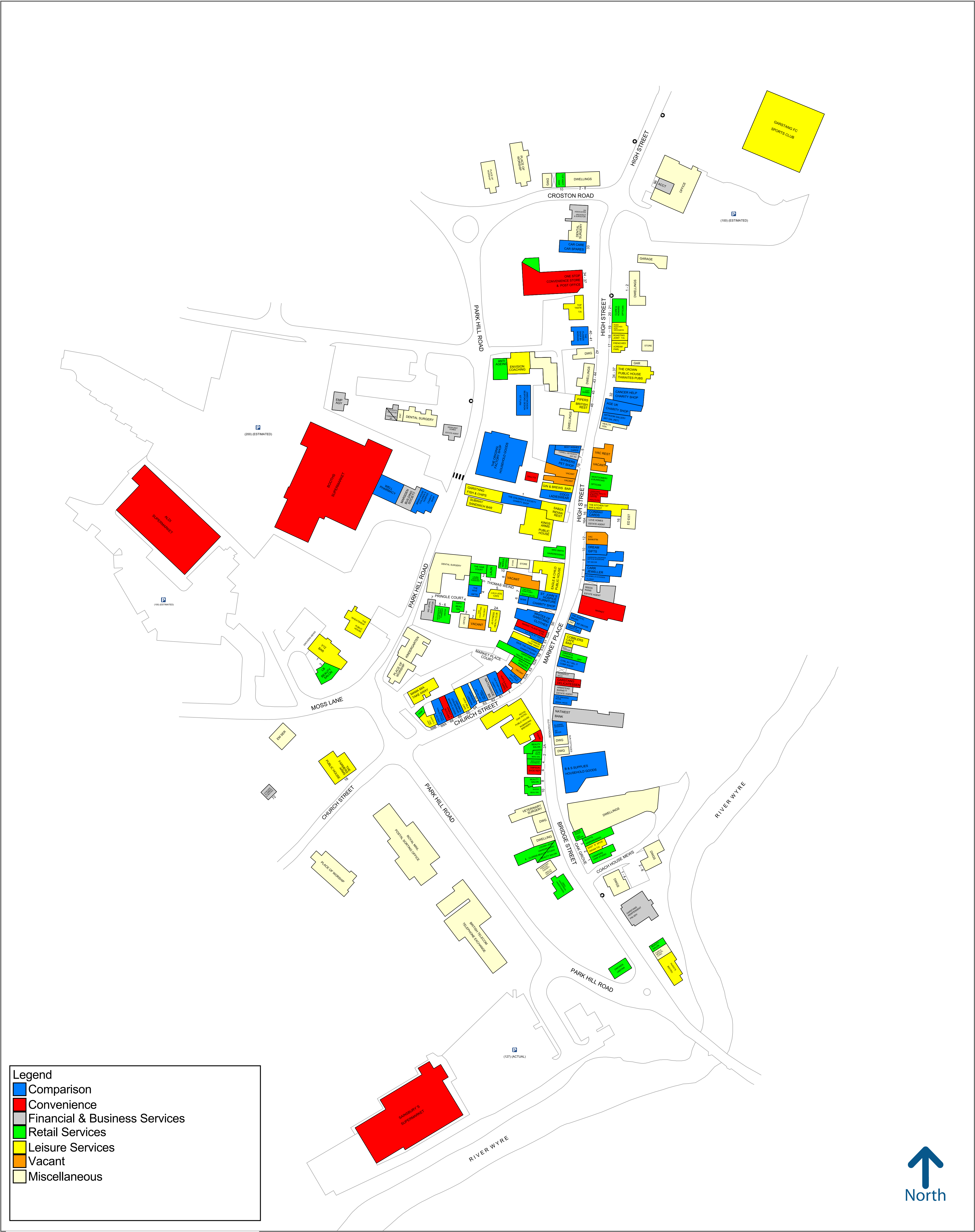
Our overall conclusion is that Garstang is a healthy town centre. It is performing well when compared against several key indicators and enjoys low vacancy rates both in terms of the number of units and proportion of floorspace.

The historic and compact nature of the town centre means that Garstang offers a pleasant shopping and leisure environment which attracts good levels of footfall. Garstang's market heritage is evident, with both its Indoor Market and its popular Thursday Outdoor Market hosting a variety of unique local and artisanal traders, which contribute to the appeal of the centre.

The convenience offer is particularly strong, being anchored by the in-centre Booths and Aldi supermarkets and complemented by a range of high-quality independents. With regard to comparison shopping, while there is a lack national multiples in the town centre, we consider one of Garstang's key strengths to be the quality and quantity of its independent retailers.

The leisure offer – while including several independent pubs, bars, restaurants and cafés – would benefit from increased diversity in the form of more family-focussed facilities or the introduction of more upmarket restaurants to capitalise on the centre's affluent catchment.

Although research for the Garstang Regeneration Framework suggests that the current provision is meeting most of the demand, parking issues are another key challenge for the town centre. There is a lack of long-stay parking and no dedicated coach parking spaces, both issues that could be addressed through a Town Centre Parking Strategy. In general, however, the centre is accessible by a range of means of transport and reasonably walkable.



50 metres

Experian Goad Plan Created: 14/10/2024  
Created By: Nexus Planning Ltd



## Poulton-le-Fylde Town Centre

### Description

Poulton-le-Fylde town centre is located in the south-west of the Wyre district. The layout of the centre reflects its history as a market town, with the pedestrianised Market Place/Church Street being a key shopping and leisure throughfare in the central part of the Poulton. Several arterial roads also provide for commercial operators and attract car and foot traffic.

The more traditional parts of the town centre are complemented by the modern Teanlowe Shopping Centre in the west, which was redeveloped in 2015 and now provides for a Booths supermarket.

This store, alongside the Aldi in the north of the centre, forms a key convenience anchor. Poulton also benefits from a number of high-quality independent retail and service traders which meet the everyday needs of residents.

In addition, Poulton is a thriving daytime and evening food and drink destination, with its proportions of units and floorspace in leisure use being well above UK averages.



**Figure 1:** Booths, which opened in the Teanlowe Centre in November 2015, is a key retail anchor



**Figure 2:** Poulton benefits from a number of high-quality independent shops and service uses



**Figure 3:** Much of the town centre is historic in character with numerous listed buildings



**Figure 4:** The former police station at Market Place is set to become a new foodhall

**Table 1 Poulton-le-Fylde Town Centre Floorspace Composition**

GOAD Category	Floorspace at 2024 (sq.m)	Floorspace at 2024 (%)	Floorspace UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	3,610	18.5%	29.2%
Convenience	4,500	23.0%	15.6%
Financial & Business	830	4.2%	6.2%
Leisure	7,620	39.0%	26.7%
Retail Service	2,030	10.4%	7.4%
Vacant	970	5.0%	14.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,560</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Composition of District centre based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

**Table 2 Poulton-le-Fylde Town Centre Unit Composition**

GOAD Category	Units at 2024 (no.)	Units at 2024 (%)	Units UK Average at 2024 (%)
Comparison	32	21.9%	26.3%
Convenience	11	7.5%	9.3%
Financial & Business	12	8.2%	8.3%
Leisure	53	36.3%	25.8%
Retail Service	28	19.2%	16.0%
Vacant	10	6.8%	14.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: District centre composition based on boundary as defined by Experian Goad and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of August 2024; UK Average from Experian Goad Report September 2024.

## Uses

Poulton serves an important main and top-up food shopping function for local residents. Its convenience offer is anchored by in-centre Booths and Aldi stores, which trade well and which ensure the town centre caters for both the upper and lower or value ends of the grocery shopping market. These national multiple supermarkets are complemented by a good range of independent convenience retailers, including butchers, a health foods store, and a greengrocer.

Comparison provision is below UK averages in terms of both floorspace and the proportion of units. This is likely due to Poulton's relative proximity to Blackpool town centre, which provides for higher order goods. The centre does contain some national multiples – including Home Bargains, Peacocks and Card Factory – although these are generally focussed at the lower end of the market. There is a high proportion of charity shops.

Poulton benefits from the presence of some high-quality independent comparison retailers, a number of which are located on Ball Street.

Poulton's proportions of leisure floorspace and units are well above the national averages and its overall offer is strong and diverse. The town centre is a significant local food and drink destination, with a thriving evening economy. The majority of leisure operators are independent and of high quality. They are concentrated in the north of the town centre but spread throughout.



The town centre also plays a key role as a service centre for local residents. The proportion of floorspace used for retail services is more than double the national average. Health and beauty operators account for more than half (53.6%) of these units, but Poulton also enjoys representation from a good range of operators including drycleaners and launderettes, opticians, a post office and several travel agents.

The proportion of floorspace used for financial and business services is also above average and the town centre provides for a variety of uses including accountants, estate agents and solicitors. Like many centres, Poulton has experienced a number of bank closures in recent years as services have moved online, and it no longer has representation from any retail banks. However, there are two building societies remaining in the centre.

#### **Daytime/Evening Economy**

Poulton's daytime economy is underpinned by its role as a convenience shopping and service centre which meets the day-to-day needs of its local residents. While both Booths and Aldi stay open until 10pm (4pm on Sundays), the majority of these operators close by 6pm.

In addition, the town centre serves as a daytime food and beverage destination. Many of these outlets, however, open late into the evening and, as a result, Poulton boasts a thriving evening economy focussed eating and drinking. All parts of the centre benefit from the footfall and activity generated by these leisure uses at night, but they are concentrated in the northern part around Breck Road and Ball Street.

#### **Vacancies**

Vacancy rates in Poulton are well below the national averages with regard to both floorspace and the proportion of units. Moreover, on the day of our site visit, two of the town centre's ten vacant units were under alteration, so this floorspace will shortly be reoccupied and repurposed. The largest vacancy, 10 Market Place (230 sq.m gross), was being converted into a new foodhall (which we discuss in more detail below in the Opportunity Sites section).

The remaining vacancies in the town centre are generally small in scale. Two of these are located within the Teanlowe Centre, with the others being loosely concentrated around Market Place. The empty units are generally well-maintained, which reduces their adverse impact on the look and feel of the centre.

#### **Opportunity Sites**

Poulton is constrained by its historic character (all of the town centre is within a Conservation Area) and the surrounding residential development. As a result, there are few opportunities for large-scale redevelopment. However, the repurposing and reoccupation of individual vacant units will be an important priority.

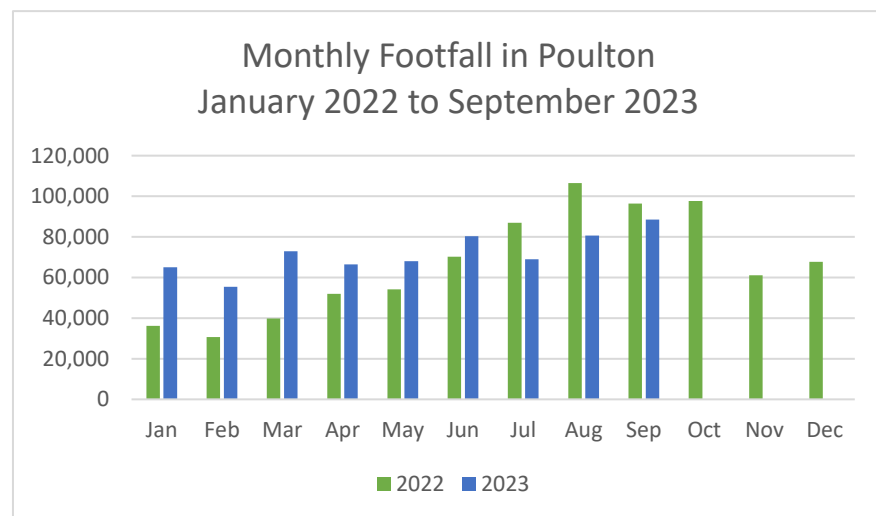
On the day of our visit, the former police station at Market Place, which had been vacant since it was decommissioned in 2018, was being converted to a new food/retail hall under planning permission reference 23/00231/FUL. This development, known as Bobby's Yard, will likely to enhance the vitality

and viability of the town centre by contributing to its already strong daytime and evening food and drink offer.

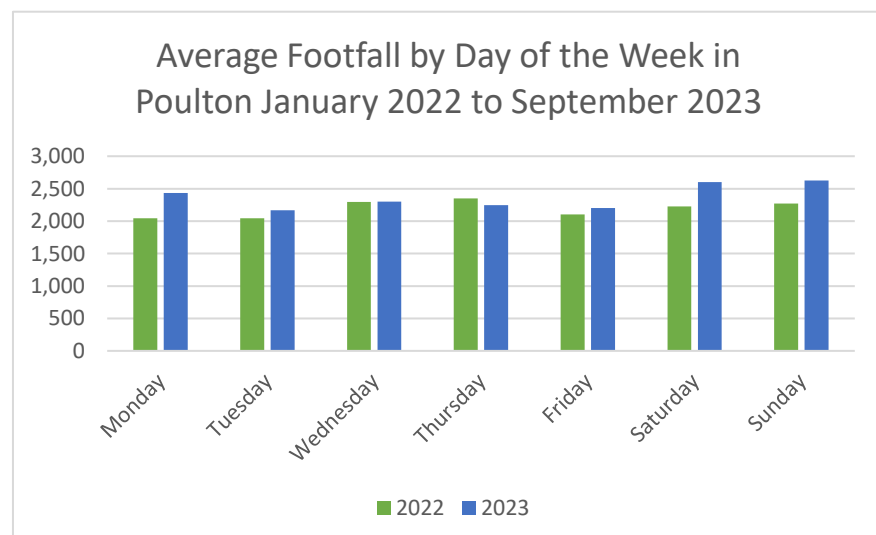
### Pedestrian Flows

Wyre Council has provided footfall data for Poulton town centre collected by CommunityVision in 2022 and in the first nine months of 2023.

CommunityVision counted a total of 799,347 daily visits to Poulton in 2022. A further 646,445 visits were recorded between January and September 2023, which represents an increase of 73,459 visits, or 12.8%, compared to the same period in 2022. The table below shows that Poulton experienced more visitors between January and June 2023 than it did during the equivalent months in 2022, whereas this trend reversed between July and September 2023.



With regard to the average footfall on each day of the week, the table below shows that Poulton's footfall is relatively stable throughout the week, but tends to experience a slightly higher number of daily visits on Saturdays and Sundays. Poulton Market trades on Mondays, and this was another popular day to visit in 2023.



Encouragingly, the daily average number of visitors was higher in 2023 (2,368) than in 2022 (2,190). It should be noted that data was only collected for the first nine months of 2023, so that the figures do not reflect the Christmas shopping period between October and December.

Our own fieldwork visit took place in August, during the school summer holidays. We observed high pedestrian activity around the Poulton's two in-centre supermarkets (which also had busy car parks) and through Market Place, which forms the central spine of the centre.

While the levels of footfall were lower within the remainder of the Teanlowe Centre and on the peripheral streets, the centre was at least moderately busy throughout.

### Accessibility

Poulton's is located on the A588 and to the east of the A585, making it well-connected by car to the surrounding settlements including Blackpool and Lytham St Annes. Our stakeholder discussions identified high levels of congested traffic as an issue for Poulton, especially at the key gateway locations of Tithebarn Street, Breck Road, Hardhorn Road and Blackpool Old Road. Several accidents have been reported around the corners of Breck Road and Ball Street, and of Blackpool Old Road and Queensway.

There is substantial car parking provision within the town centre, with the Teanlowe Centre providing for 332 free spaces and with additional surface-level car parks at Aldi (80 spaces), Wheatsheaf Way (180 spaces), and Blackpool Old Road (40 spaces). There is also on-street parking on the centre's arterial roads, including Tithebarn Street and Ball Street (although, as we note below, this can impede pedestrian movement and safety).

The Council's Poulton Regeneration Framework report notes that a number of transport improvements to support the highways network in and around Poulton are identified in the Poulton-Le-Fylde Highway Mitigation Strategy. The Strategy includes the delivery of a new car park with access onto Poulton Road/Tithebarn Street to serve the town centre. A new car park providing up to 200 spaces has received outline planning permission under reference 17/00632/OUTMAJ, but has not yet been constructed.

In terms of connectivity by public transport, Poulton benefits from its own railway station located within a short walk of the town centre. This provides services to Preston, Blackpool and further afield.

Bus stops are located on Tithebarn Street and Blackpool Old Road, and provide frequent and regular services to locations including Fleetwood, Garstang, Blackpool, Lytham St Annes, Preston and Lancaster.

There are no dedicated bicycle lanes, and the busy car traffic may deter visitors from using this means of transport. There is, however, some cycle parking located at the Teanlowe Centre.

Pedestrian accessibility in Poulton, including for those with impaired mobility, suffers from the impacts of heavy car traffic and the 'blind spots' created by on-street parking at locations such as Ball Street. Another barrier to walkability is the town centre's layout. During our discussions, stakeholders highlighted that Blackpool Old Road is a particularly wide road, having two lanes and a lay-by for buses, which can make it difficult and dangerous to cross. In addition, the historic character of Poulton's street pattern means that some of its pavements are narrow in places and can easily become congested and, when in close proximity to car traffic, threaten pedestrian safety.

In contrast, the pedestrianised areas of the town centre around Market Place and the Teanlowe Centre are much easier to traverse on foot and well-connected to peripheral roads. The public realm strategy set out in the Poulton Regeneration Framework recommends further interventions to prioritise the needs of pedestrians and improve their overall experience of the town centre, including the introduction of new surface treatments and street furniture.

#### Perception of Safety

As noted above, Poulton can feel car-dominated and the congested traffic, on-street parking and layout can contribute to a lack of safety for both drivers and pedestrians, with several collisions having been reported at Ball Street/Breck Road and Blackpool Old Road/Queensway.

On the other hand, the number of cars, together with the consistent footfall, contribute to high levels of natural and passive surveillance that reduce any perceived threat of crime. Poulton also has a compact and legible layout. These factors mean that it feels largely safe and secure during the day.

However, our stakeholder discussions indicated that there is a perception that Poulton's numerous pubs and bars can face issues with anti-social behaviour from a minority of users at night. These problems are most evident in the streets in the north of the centre where the evening food and drink uses are concentrated, such as Breck Road.

The town centre does have street lighting throughout, but would likely benefit from additional measures such as visible CCTV aimed at ensuring that all visitors behave in a way which is respectful to the local community. In addition, the Poulton Regeneration Framework recommends a targeted approach to the public realm improvements to distribute footfall and help visitors get home safely.

#### Environmental Quality

Poulton is generally an attractive town centre and its pedestrianised areas, in particular, provide a pleasant shopping and leisure environment. The streets are generally clean and litter free, with planters and street furniture contributing to the environmental quality.

The centre falls within a Conservation Area and accommodates a number of high-quality listed buildings. One of these, the Church of St Chad also

provides welcome greenspace and high-quality, mature trees in a central part of Poulton. There is further greenspace at the Jean Stansfield Memorial Park, which lies outside but the immediate east of the town centre boundary.

The Teanlowe Centre was redeveloped in 2015, with the project involving the construction of the Booths supermarket. This investment has resulted in a higher-quality, modern shopping centre.

While the busy traffic and the expanse of car parking can make Poulton feel somewhat car-dominated, overall, we consider its environmental quality to be reasonably high.

## Conclusions

Poulton effectively fulfils the everyday convenience retail and service needs of its local residents, being anchored by Booths and Aldi and containing a good variety of independent traders. Moreover, the town centre achieves success as a daytime and evening food and drink destination.

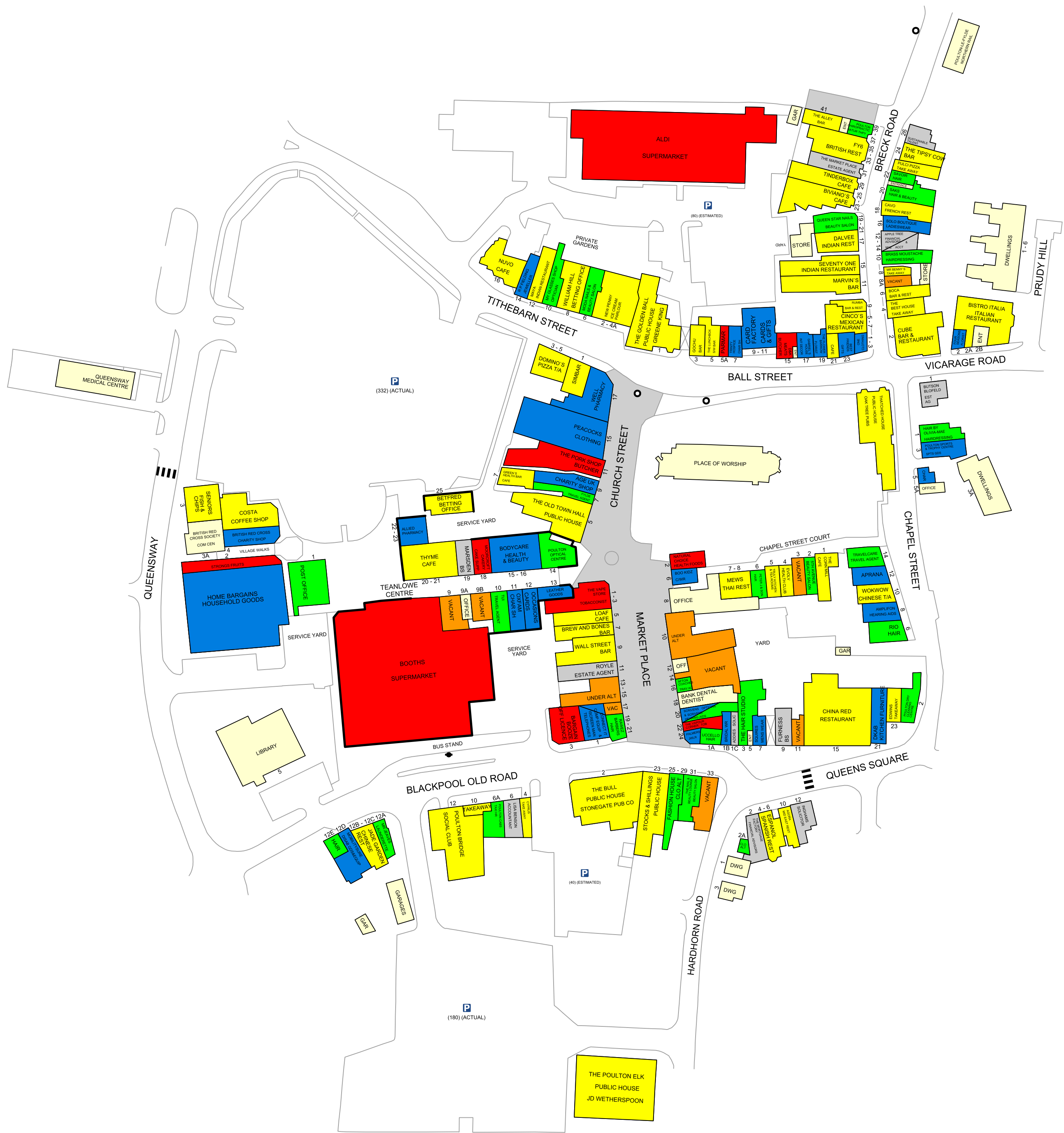
Comparison provision is more limited, likely reflecting the proximity of Blackpool town centre, which is a focus of higher order goods. Nonetheless, the centre supports a range of national multiples, albeit skewed towards the lower or value end of the market, and some high-quality independent retailers.

However, Poulton's layout and traffic congestion pose some challenges, particularly for pedestrians. The busy and wide roads detract from the overall walkability of the centre and, while there are areas of the town centre that benefit from pedestrianisation, further improvements are recommended to prioritise pedestrians and enhance safety. Anti-social behaviour associated with the evening economy uses focussed in the north of the town centre is another issue in Poulton.

Despite these challenges, we consider that Poulton is overall a healthy town centre benefitting from low vacancy rates, high footfall, an attractive and historic environment, and good public transport connections.

---





Legend

- Comparison
- Convenience
- Financial & Business Service
- Retail Service
- Leisure Service
- Vacant
- Miscellaneous

