

Town Centre	Sent	Returned	% Returned
St.Helens	442	90	20%
Earlestown	124	31	25%
TOTAL	566	121	21%



ST.HELENS TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

Questionnaires Distributed:

442

Responses: 90 (20%)

Q2. How would you best describe your business?

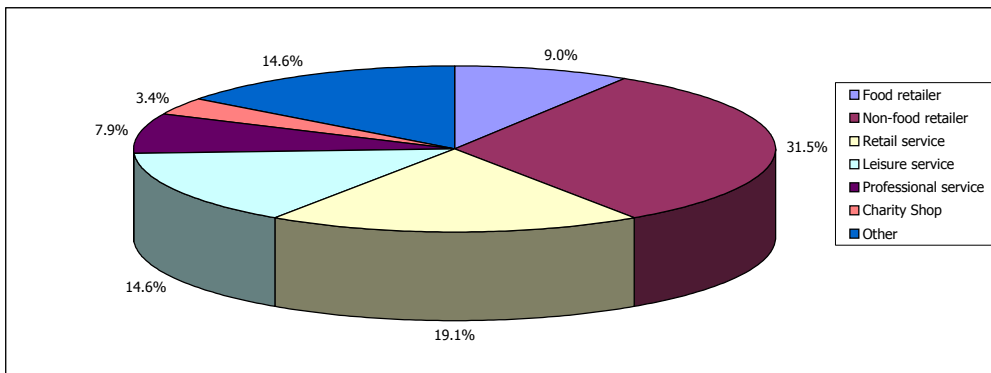
Food retailer	8	(9.0%)
Non-food retailer	28	(31.5%)
Retail service	17	(19.1%)
Leisure service	13	(14.6%)
Professional service	7	(7.9%)
Charity Shop	3	(3.4%)
Other	13	(14.6%)
	89	(100.0%)

Not Answered:

1

Other:

Arts Centre [1], Fabrics [1], Taxi Services [1], Jewellers [2], Theatre [1], Discount store [1], Local Authority [1], Wholesale protective workwear [1], Pharmacy [1], Training facility/Charity [1], Jeweller (Retail)/Pawnbroker (Professional) [1], Education provider [1]

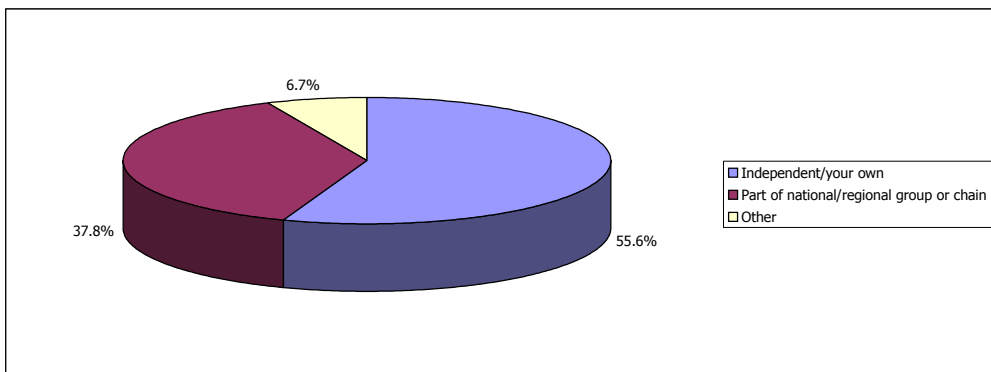


Q3. Is your business?

Independent/your own	50	(55.6%)
Part of national/regional group or chain	34	(37.8%)
Other	6	(6.7%)
	90	(100.0%)

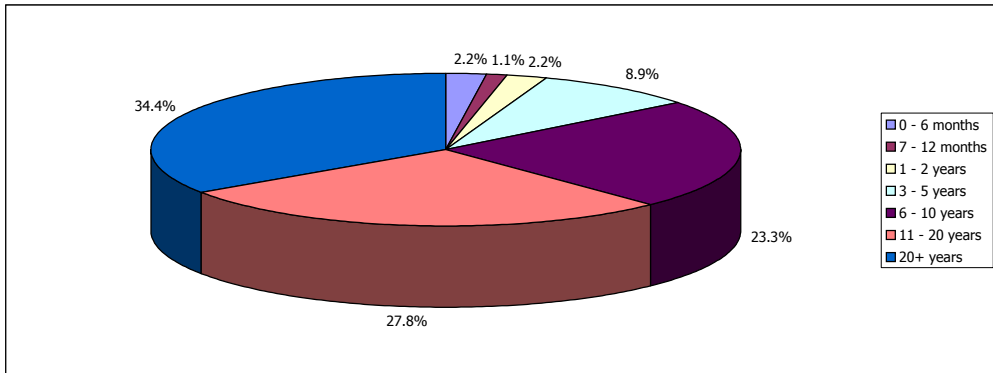
Other:

Limited Company [1], Franchise [1], Rugby Club Shop [1], Lease tenancy [1], Local Authority [1], Charitable trust/Public Sector [1]



Q4. How long, approximately, has the business traded in St.Helens Town Centre?

0 - 6 months	2	(2.2%)
7 - 12 months	1	(1.1%)
1 - 2 years	2	(2.2%)
3 - 5 years	8	(8.9%)
6 - 10 years	21	(23.3%)
11 - 20 years	25	(27.8%)
20+ years	31	(34.4%)
	90	(100.0%)



Q5. Why did you choose St.Helens Town Centre as a business location?

Always been here [1], Live locally [6], Established in 1931 [1], Live in town [9], Already established [3], Chance? [1], Knew area and people well [1], Commercial reasons - corporate decision [1], Family live in town [1], Leasing opportunity [1], Appropriate place/market for business [14], To limit staff travelling time [1], 6 years ago it was a buzzing Town Centre [1], City Centre location for business [1], Company chose [3], Business for sale [2], Live in Wigan [1], It was a busy, thriving town [2], Surrounded by private and commercial [1], Have at least one branch in every town [1], Used to be a nice town [1], Town needed upper-end menswear retailer [1], No other Wetherspoons here at the time [1], Location was good [3], Not applicable [2], Local to original partner [1], Didn't choose; it was here [1], Little competition [1], Data suggested the town would work for our business model [1], Bought in 1991 as part of small chain of card shops [1], Inbetween two cities [1], Good road/rail networks [1], Used to be a good place to do business [1], Family business [1], Have other business in town [1], Was a good location until parking restrictions were increased [1], Used to be a prosperous town [1], Heao Office [1], To improve education, training and behaviour of young people here and in surrounding areas [1], Central to community it serves [1], Saw gap for upmarket beauty salon [1], Suitable unit [1]

Not Answered: 17

Q6. Are the business premises leased or owner occupied?

Leased	66	(75.0%)
Owner Occupied	20	(22.7%)
Don't Know	2	(2.3%)
	88	(100.0%)

Other Answer Given:

Freehold [1]

Not Answered: 1

Q7. How many staff does the business employ?

Full Time	5438	(86.9%)
Part Time	821	(13.1%)
	6259	(100.0%)

Other Answer Given:

4 Volunteers [2]

Not Answered: 4

Q8. Has the business always operated from St.Helens Town Centre?

Yes	84	(93.3%)
No	6	(6.7%)
	90	(100.0%)

If no, where did you relocate from?

South Manchester [1], Huyton, Liverpool [1], Manchester [1]

Not Answered: 3

Q9. During the time you have been trading in St.Helens Town Centre, has the business...?

Grown significantly	8	(8.9%)
Grown moderately	25	(27.8%)
Remained largely static	17	(18.9%)
Declined moderately	22	(24.4%)
Declined significantly	18	(20.0%)
	90	(100.0%)

Q10. How would you say that your business is currently performing?

Very Well	2	(2.2%)
Well	15	(16.7%)
Moderately	45	(50.0%)
Poorly	23	(25.6%)
Very Poorly	5	(5.6%)
Total	90	(100.0%)

Q11. What type of customers does your business rely on primarily?

Residents from in or around St.Helens Town Centre	46	(31.5%)
Residents from across the District	45	(30.8%)
Residents from outside the District	10	(6.8%)
Specialist buyers	7	(4.8%)
Workers from St.Helens Town Centre	10	(6.8%)
Students from St.Helens Town Centre	8	(5.5%)
Passers-by	16	(11.0%)
Other	4	(2.7%)
Total	146	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 1

Other:

Commercial across District [1], Old people [1], Company & Manuf [1], St.Helens Education Department [1]

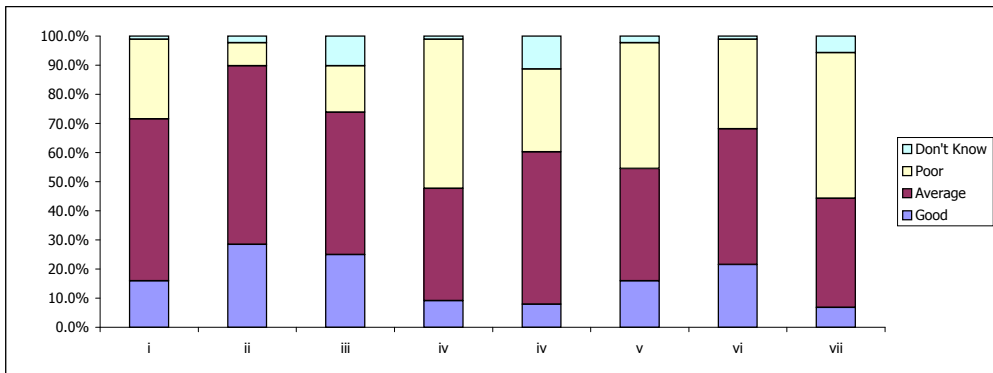
Q12. How do you rate the following aspects of the Town Centre?

	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Transport									
i. Appearance of the entrances to St.Helens Town Centre	14	(15.91%)	49	(55.68%)	24	(27.27%)	1	(1.14%)	88
ii. Accessibility by pedestrians	25	(28.41%)	54	(61.36%)	7	(7.95%)	2	(2.27%)	88
iii. Accessibility by public transport	22	(25.00%)	43	(48.86%)	14	(15.91%)	9	(10.23%)	88
iv. Accessibility by vehicles	8	(9.09%)	34	(38.64%)	45	(51.14%)	1	(1.14%)	88
v. Amount of signage for vehicles	7	(7.95%)	46	(52.27%)	25	(28.41%)	10	(11.36%)	88
vi. Amount of car parking	14	(15.91%)	34	(38.64%)	38	(43.18%)	2	(2.27%)	88
vii. Location of car parking	19	(21.59%)	41	(46.59%)	27	(30.68%)	1	(1.14%)	88
viii. Pricing of car parking	6	(6.82%)	33	(37.50%)	44	(50.00%)	5	(5.68%)	88
Total	115		334		224		31		

Not Answered: 2

Other:

No comments



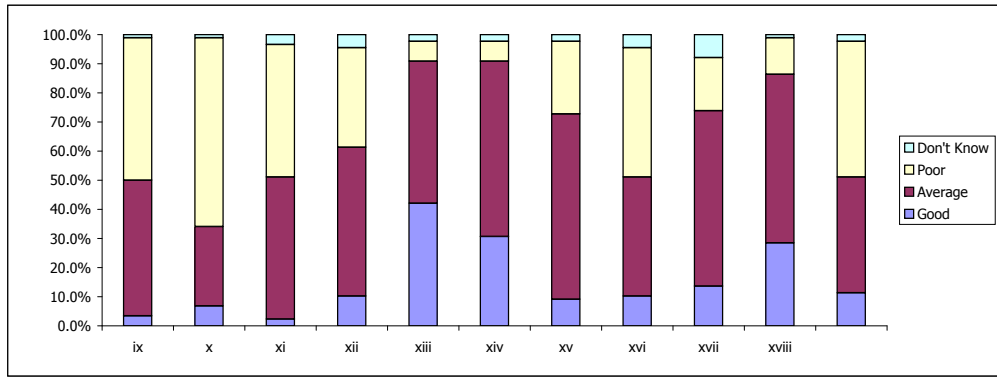
	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Business Offer									
ix. Number of shops in general	3	(3.41%)	41	(46.59%)	43	(48.86%)	1	(1.14%)	88
x. Range of shops in general	6	(6.82%)	24	(27.27%)	57	(64.77%)	1	(1.14%)	88
xi. Number of independent traders	2	(2.27%)	43	(48.86%)	40	(45.45%)	3	(3.41%)	88
xii. Number of multiple traders	9	(10.23%)	45	(51.14%)	30	(34.09%)	4	(4.55%)	88
xiii. Number of supermarkets	37	(42.05%)	43	(48.86%)	6	(6.82%)	2	(2.27%)	88
xiv. Number of services in general	27	(30.68%)	53	(60.23%)	6	(6.82%)	2	(2.27%)	88
xv. Range of services in general	8	(9.09%)	56	(63.64%)	22	(25.00%)	2	(2.27%)	88
xvi. Number of restaurants	9	(10.23%)	36	(40.91%)	39	(44.32%)	4	(4.55%)	88
xvii. Number of licensed premises	12	(13.64%)	53	(60.23%)	16	(18.18%)	7	(7.95%)	88
xviii. Number of fast-food shops	25	(28.41%)	51	(57.95%)	11	(12.50%)	1	(1.14%)	88
xix. Market	10	(11.36%)	35	(39.77%)	41	(46.59%)	2	(2.27%)	88
Total	148		480		311		29		

Not Answered: 2

Other:

Good retailers [1]

Poor



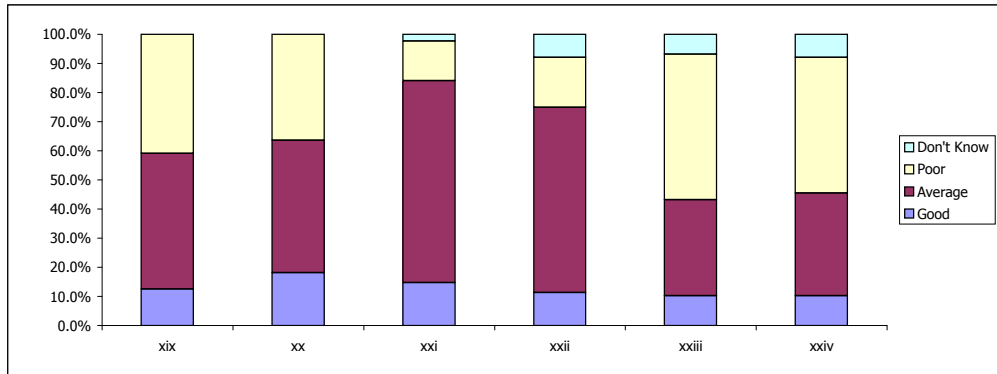
	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Public Realm									
xx. Attractiveness of the public realm	11	(12.50%)	41	(46.59%)	36	(40.91%)	0	(0.00%)	88
xxi. Cleanliness of the public realm	16	(18.18%)	40	(45.45%)	32	(36.36%)	0	(0.00%)	88
xxii. Safety within the public realm	13	(14.77%)	61	(69.32%)	12	(13.64%)	2	(2.27%)	88
xxiii. Amount of signage for pedestrians	10	(11.36%)	56	(63.64%)	15	(17.05%)	7	(7.95%)	88
xxiv. Number of events	9	(10.23%)	29	(32.95%)	44	(50.00%)	6	(6.82%)	88
xxv. Range of events	9	(10.23%)	31	(35.23%)	41	(46.59%)	7	(7.95%)	88
	68		258		180		22		

Not Answered: 2

Other:

Overall appearance and impression of the town [1], Christmas Grotto [1]

Poor



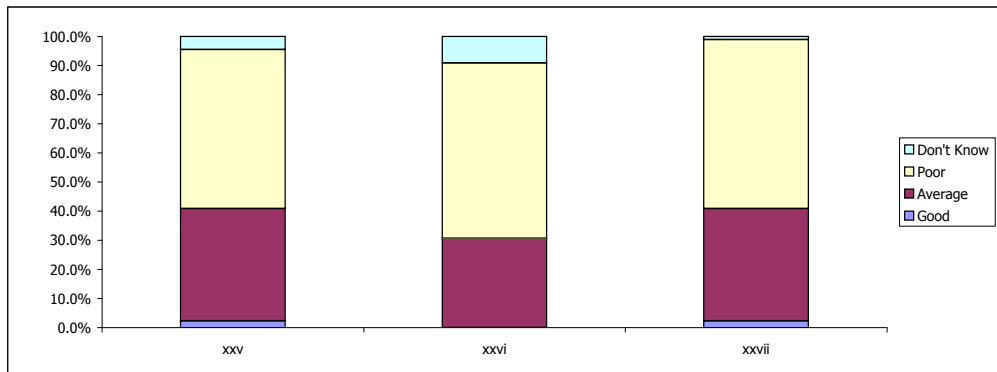
	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Other									
xxvi. Amount of marketing and promotion	2	(2.27%)	34	(38.64%)	48	(54.55%)	4	(4.55%)	88
xxvii. Range of marketing and promotion	0	(0.00%)	27	(30.68%)	53	(60.23%)	8	(9.09%)	88
xxviii. Image of St.Helens Town Centre	2	(2.27%)	34	(38.64%)	51	(57.95%)	1	(1.14%)	88
	4		95		152		13		

Not Answered: 2

Other:

Advertisement [1], Big Issue sellers/survey people [1]

Poor



Comments:

*Too many licensed premises [4], Too many fast food [2], Too many Traffic Wardens [1], Parking has become more expensive [1], More parking restrictions [1], No free parking [1], Parking should be free [1], Need to look after shops/markets/pubs [1], Business rates too high [2], Everyone is going to Liverpool and Manchester for drinks, shops, food, etc. [1], Lagging behind compared to Warrington and Wigan; that's why people don't visit the town [1], Free parking for at least two hours [1], Need more buses [1], Traffic Wardens are paid for with public money when we should be cost saving [1], If parking was free there would be no empty shops [1], Too many Pound shops [1], Too many Charity shops [1], Market is depressing; look at Widnes for inspiration [1], Need more inward development - cars not compete with other towns nearby - this is shocking! [1], Image of town is very poor [2], Town is shabby [1], Too many pawn shops [1], Too many bargain basement shops [1], Too many boarded up shops [1], Market is pitiful! [1], The town's reputation in other towns is embarrassing [1], Town is a laughing stock as traders say the business rates are untenable [1], In Warrington business is positively encouraged with free parking and low rates [1], Other towns are vibrant, alive and busy unlike ours [1], The people making decisions here are completely out of touch and get very well paid for the privilege which is a downright travesty; they are getting paid for closing down the town [1], Need more big business [1], Too many food outlets [1], Too many empty shops [1], High rates are stopping people from taking on shops [1], There are at least seven empty premises on Barrow Street [1], Barrow Street used to be thriving - not anymore! [1], Roads were closed in March for Run and signs were poor for re-route [1], Town looks run-down and poor [1], Money needs to be used to bring people in [1], Free parking facilities are non-existent [1], With Traffic Wardens being so keen, everyone shops in Widnes [1], Double-yellow lines on every corner [1], Traffic Wardens unreasonable - causing deterioration of business [1], People parking in loading areas due to parking being too expensive is a problem [1], Lots of customers have started shopping in other towns due to it being a dump [1], Town is full of junkies and alcoholics [1], There is pigeon cr*p everywhere [1], Very poor signage for vehicles [1], Very poor Market [1], Far too many Big Issue sellers/survey people [1], Man in cleaner van is a waste of time and money! [1], No Grotto! So customers went elsewhere and saw how good other towns' Markets were [1], Not enough good restaurants [1], We are surrounded by wine bars [1], Surrounding towns have been well developed [1], Other towns have good shopping centres, cafés, etc. [1], St.Helens gets shabbier by the year [1], Is nearly a ghost town [1], Town is never busy [1], There is nothing to attract people here [1], My shop is located in a secondary trading position, so anything organised in the centre doesn't benefit me [1], Parking increase was too high [1], More large signage of events needed [1], We need to raise the profile of the town [1], Lack of short and long-term parking [1], Poor quality licensed premises [1], Poor quality fast food shops [1], Parking is not good and doesn't encourage people into the town [1], Bars and restaurants are of a poor quality [1], No encouragement for small independents to grow [1], You can't ask residents about signage; only a visitor can comment [1]*

Q13. What improvement measures would you like to see in the Town Centre?

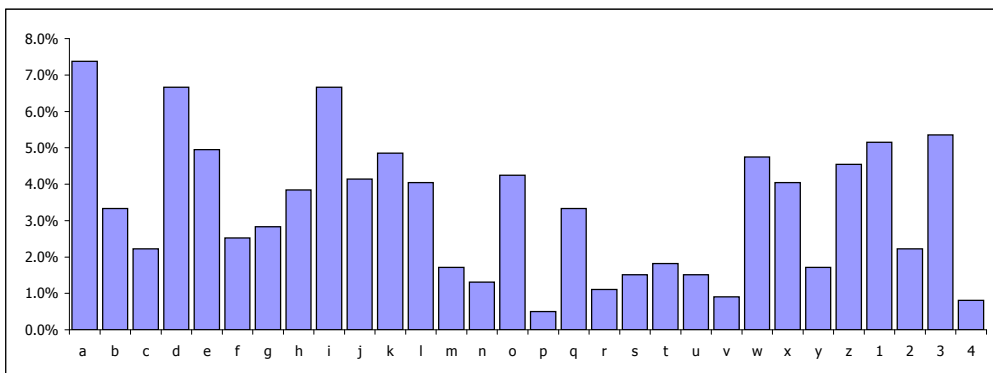
	No	
a. Increased choice/range of shops	73	(7.37%)
b. More national multiples	33	(3.33%)
c. A new foodstore in the Town Centre	22	(2.22%)
d. A new department store in the Town Centre	66	(6.67%)
e. More independent/specialist traders	49	(4.95%)
f. Improved street paving	25	(2.53%)
g. Improved street furniture	28	(2.83%)
h. Improved built environment	38	(3.84%)
i. Lower parking charges	66	(6.67%)
j. More car parking	41	(4.14%)
k. Better mix of short/long stay parking	48	(4.85%)
l. More street cleaning	40	(4.04%)
m. Improved public transport	17	(1.72%)
n. Improved access by foot and cycle	13	(1.31%)
o. More entertainment/leisure facilities	42	(4.24%)
p. A new cinema	5	(0.51%)
q. A bowling alley	33	(3.33%)
r. A new sports centre	11	(1.11%)
s. A new leisure/splash pool	15	(1.52%)
t. More hotels	18	(1.82%)
u. More residential development	15	(1.52%)
v. More commercial offices	9	(0.91%)
w. More quality restaurants/pavement cafés	47	(4.75%)
x. More specialist markets	40	(4.04%)
y. More cultural facilities	17	(1.72%)
z. Improved security/CCTV	45	(4.55%)
1. Greater promotion/marketing of the centre	51	(5.15%)
2. Improved signposting	22	(2.22%)
3. Public toilets	53	(5.35%)
4. Other	8	(0.81%)
	990	(100.0%)

Other:

Need more bins [1], No cameras along Barrow Street at all [1], A more modern environment [1], Discounted/free parking for centre staff [1], Free parking [1], Better HIDDEN smoking areas away from front doors of shopping areas [1], Removal of double-yellow lines or Bridge Street [1], Two hours free parking everywhere as per Fingerpost - it works [1]

Not Answered:

1



Q14. Do you think there is an appropriate mix of shops and other non-retail uses (e.g. banks, building societies, amusement arcades, cafés, pubs and restaurants, fast food outlets)?

Good Balance	26	(32.50%)
Too many non-retail uses	38	(47.50%)
Not enough non-retail uses	16	(20.00%)
	80	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 10

Comments:

Too many banks taking prime positions [2], If retail outlets were open it could be a good balance [1], Too many clubs/pubs/bars [6], Need more up to date cafés and restaurants [2], Too many Pound shops [2], No department store [1], No baby shops [1], Only one shoe shop [1], No music shop [1], Too many cafés/coffee shops [1], Too many restaurants [1], Too many charity shops [3], Too many takeaways [1], Too many taxis [1], Need more independent retail [1], Crap shops [1], Nowhere to eat [1], All the real money goes elsewhere [1]

No Comments: 38

Q15. What, if anything, do you consider are the main barriers to the trading performance of your business?

a. High Rents/Overheads	47	(11.01%)
b. Lack of passing trade outside your premises	47	(11.01%)
c. Poor location of your premises	17	(3.98%)
d. Inadequate amount of customer car parking	46	(10.77%)
e. Price of car parking	51	(11.94%)
f. Competition from other traders in the Town Centre	21	(4.92%)

If so, where?

Church Square [1], Next door [1], Poundland [1], Poundworld [2], Home Bargain [1], Heron [2], M&S [1], Westfield Street [1], Barrow Street [1], Opposite [1], HCUK [1], Toni & Guy [1], Hardshaw Centre [1], Supermarketes [1], Game [1], Gamestation [1], HMV [1], Smyths [1], That's Entertainment [1], All around, due to parking [1], Hippodrome Bingo [1], Wetherspoon's [1], Buzby's Counting House [1], Cheap bars, i.e. Frankie's, selling beer at ridiculous prices [1], Co-op [1], Other Salons [1]

Not Answered: 6

g. Competition from out-of-centre stores in St.Helens	18	(4.22%)
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If so, where?

Warrington [5], Widnes [4], Wigan [3], Liverpool [2], Manchester [1], WH Smith [1], Martin News [1], Paudium? News [1], Retail Parks [4], Retail Parks inc. Prescot [1], Trafford Centre [1], Ravenhead [1], Main Street [1], St.Mary's Arcade [1], Poundworld in Retail Park [1], Supermarkets [1], Tesco [1]

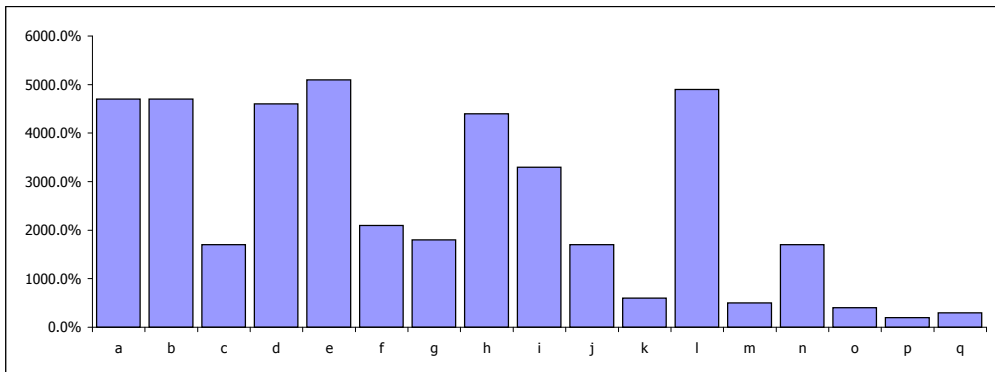
Not Answered: 3

h. Lack of day visitors/tourists to the town	44	(10.30%)
i. Anti-social behaviour	33	(7.73%)
j. Poor security/policing	17	(3.98%)
k. The inadequacy of your current premises	6	(1.41%)
l. Poor quality of Town Centre shopping environment	49	(11.48%)
m. Mail Order	5	(1.17%)
n. Internet	17	(3.98%)
o. Don't Know	4	(0.94%)
p. None	2	(0.47%)
q. Other	3	(0.70%)
	427	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 1

Other:

Since Traffic Wardens appeared, have had a drop in sales [1], Had prime position but Council changed the layout of the town [1], Local paper shouldn't advertise out-of-town shops [1], Very high Council Tax [1], Next door is a place where jobless go for job-starts; 20 to 30 people congregate outside smoking and spitting and it puts people off visiting Barrow Street - nobody will help with this problem! [1], Traffic Wardens attitude [1], Large, empty building opposite [1], Duke Street has been cut off from the Town Centre [1]



Q16. Have you any plans to alter your business in any way in the next five years?

2005

No	39	(42.86%)
Yes, close	3	(3.30%)
Yes, relocate in Town Centre	6	(6.59%)
Yes, relocate to another Town Centre	6	(6.59%)
Yes, relocate out-of-centre	5	(5.49%)
Yes, extend floorspace	1	(1.10%)
Yes, reduce floorspace	3	(3.30%)
Yes, refurbish existing floorspace	8	(8.79%)
Yes, expand range of products	14	(15.38%)
Yes, other	6	(6.59%)
	91	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 7**Other:**

May look at company options to expand [1], Set up a website [1], Close if trade keeps falling [1], New signage/shop front [1], Could have to close very soon [1], Training for disabled people [1]

If you are relocating, where are you considering moving to?

Warrington [2], Liverpool [1], Wigan [2], Southport [1], Manchester [2], Widnes [1], Barrow Street [1], Outside Town Centre [1], Ravenhead Retail Park [1], Retail Park [1], New Stadium store [1], Nearby [1], Preston [1], Knowsley [1]

Not Answered: 10**If relocating, what is the main reason for this decision?**

Parking [3], Lease is up [1], Rates [1], Council has no future; only Pound shops etc. [1], Anti-social behaviour [2], Rubbish [1], Lack of footfall [2], This town is over [1], The Council don't care and neither do the landlords [1], Purpose built store [1], Rent is far too expensive [1], Poor footfall [2], Lack of quality businesses [1]

Not Answered: 12**17. Which centre(s) do you consider to be St.Helens biggest competitor?**

None [2], All, as all are better than St.Helens [1], Warrington [42], Widnes [16], Wigan [33], Liverpool Town Centre [18], Retail Parks [2], New Tesco Superstore on the Retail Park [1], Manchester [7], Trafford Centre [9], Liverpool One [6], Retail Park - St.Helens [2], Widnes Retail Park [1], Manchester Arndale [1], Every one [1], Ravenhead [1], Chester [1], Golden Square, Warrington [1], Prescot [1]. All of them [1]

Not Answered: 21**17a. Why do you consider this centre to be a competitor?**

Better quality of shops [4], Free parking [13], Better mix of shops [11], Larger stores [2], Easily accessible [4], More attractive [1] Customer feedback [1], Recently updated Town Centre retail offer [1], Warrington has a new, clean Shopping Centre under cover [2], Great Market [1], Always busy [2], Great shopping [1], Good, affordable parking [2], Cleaner [7], Smarter [1], Friendlier [2], Better presented [1], Nicer [2], Bigger centre with more to offer [1], Retail Parks are more convenient [1], St.Helens is not up to scratch [1], Bigger retailers for clothing and shoes [1], Better retail environment [1], More choice [4], Better shops [4], 20 minutes away, free parking and everything under one roof [1], Choice of stores [3], Shopping environment [1], Parking [3], A wider, more modern choice [1], Better Markets [4], They won't put up with anti-social behaviour [1], New shopping centres [5], Better class of shops and people [2], More shops on offer [6], Under cover [2], Better quality [1], New builds [1], Better layout [1], Traditional buildings kept [1], Great variety of traders [1], Larger variety of goods [1], Public transport very close by [1], Clean and fresh [1], Parking in centre [1], Close proximity [2], Larger, more modern centre [1], More amenities [1], Popular [1], More modern [2], Younger shops [1], Good cross-section of high market and bargain shops [1], Department stores [2], More people, especially at night time [1], Have more to offer [1], Better parking [2], Less empty shops [1], Wide variety of retail for all [1], Cheaper bars and pubs [1], Primark [1], Nicer restaurants [1], Newer [1], Shopping and leisure [1], Big national chains [1], Better quality bars/restaurants/coffee shops [1], Better [1]

Not Answered: 29**Q18. Do you operate any other businesses in any other centres in St.Helens Borough?**

Yes	15	(18.3%)
No	67	(81.7%)
	82	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 8**Q18a. If yes, where is this?**

Carpet Warehouse [1], Lea Green [1], Bridge Street [1], Elephant Lane [1], Retail Park [1], Church Street [1], Sutton Oak Drive [1], All over the North West [1], Burn The Rock [1], Church Square Shopping Centre [1], Rainford [1], Billinge [1], Hardshaw Shopping Centre [1], Newton-le-Willows Campus [1], Prescott [1], Knowsley [1]

Not Answered: 2**Q18b. If yes, is this other business trading better, worse, or about the same?**

Better	8	(53.3%)
Worse	2	(13.3%)
About the same	5	(33.3%)
	15	(100.0%)

Q19. Does your business currently have its own website?

Yes	59	67.0%
No	29	33.0%
	88	100.0%

Not Answered: 2

Q19a. What services does your website provide to customers?

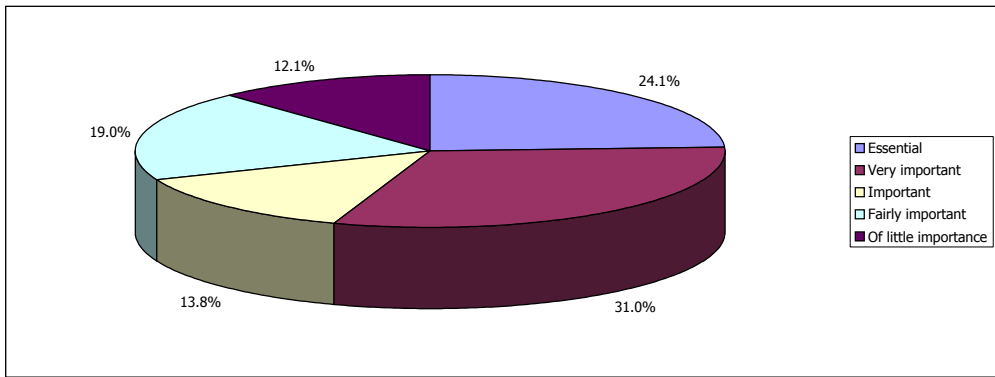
Ability to browse goods available at your premises	36	22.0%
Ability to order goods directly from the website	23	14.0%
Ability to order goods that will be delivered to a designated address	19	11.6%
Ability to order goods that can be picked up in store	13	7.9%
Contact information, e.g. telephone number, store locator, etc.	49	29.9%
Contact directly via e-mail	24	14.6%
	164	100.0%

Not Answered: 5

Q19b. How important is your website to your business?

Essential	14	24.1%
Very important	18	31.0%
Important	8	13.8%
Fairly important	11	19.0%
Of little importance	7	12.1%
	58	100.0%

Not Answered: 1



Q19c. Does your website attract customers from a wider catchment, i.e. beyond St.Helens?

Yes	44	80.0%
No	11	20.0%
	55	100.0%

Other Answer Given:

Don't Know [1]

Not Answered: 3

Q19d. Do customers visit your store as a result of browsing your website?

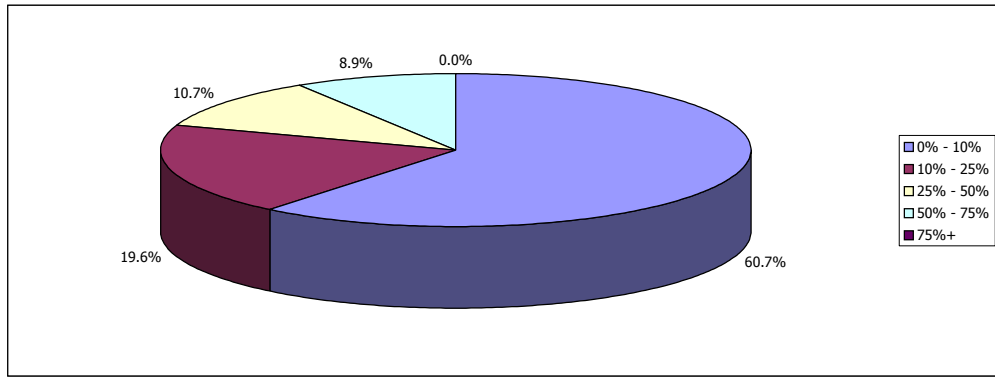
Yes	41	73.2%
No	15	26.8%
	56	100.0%

Not Answered: 3

Q19e. What proportion of your sales are from the internet?

0% - 10%	34	60.7%
10% - 25%	11	19.6%
25% - 50%	6	10.7%
50% - 75%	5	8.9%
75%+	0	0.0%
	56	100.0%

Not Answered: 3



Q20. Why do you not have a website?

Don't have a computer	4	13.3%
Not relevant/necessary	8	26.7%
Too expensive	4	13.3%
Too time consuming	4	13.3%
Do not have the skills to produce/run a website	6	20.0%
In the process of designing a website	4	13.3%
Total	30	100.0%

Not Answered:

7

If you have any further comments in regard to St.Helens Town Centre, please feel free to express your views below.

Parking [1], Need to attract bigger retailers, i.e. Primark, Debenhams [2], Better quality shops [1], Council to work with retailers [1], Our sales have dropped 20% since Traffic Wardens started [1], More events, i.e. European Markets [1], I wouldn't shop in St.Helens [2], Keep it cheap, fill the units [1], No variety of shops [2], Market is awful [1], Need shops like Debenhams [1], Need shops to cater for all age groups, not just the young [1], Reduce Council Tax [1], Too much competition from other similar businesses - can not compete [1], Reduce rates and rents [4], Thank you for finally listening to businesses in St.Helens [1], We look forward in anticipation to an improved Town Centre [1], Too many shops have closed and have been replaced by pizza and kebab shops [1], Our business was burgled in Jan - not one camera around to help! [1], Please review parking before Tesco Superstore opens [1], Any reduction in passing trade will be fatal to the town [1], We have a big problem on Barrow Street with youths congregating and smoking outside A4e [1], Barrow Street is always full of litter [1], Barrow Street customers feel intimidated walking past crowds of youths [1], Doesn't seem to be any visual investment [1], Customers are moving away as the town is not the place it used to be [1], Lack of parking [1], Lack of toilets [1], Entrance and exit to town is a bottleneck; visitors have no idea where they're going [1], St.Helens Retail Park stops customers coming into town [1], Main problem is lack of on-street parking [1], Town Centre is drab [1], There is a lack of key stores [1], Competition from Retail Parks with good stores and free parking [1], Lack of business support [1], Parking is a real concern - high prices and poor parking! [1], High rates mean that shops have closed down [1], Town is less desirable for people to come to [1], Market is non-existent, it is half of what it used to be [1], There is nothing to draw people in [1], As usual St.Helens falls behind - but why with such high Council Taxes? [1], Town needs tidying up [1], Need flowers, plants, hanging baskets [1], Pavements need cleaning regularly [1], Don't allow drinking on the streets [1], Remove skateboarders [1], Need more coffee shops and nicer restaurants [1], If the management and the Council don't change their attitudes, the town will be over [1], Parking prices are scandalous! [2], Feel safe; good Police profile [1], Create free local business booklet with names and addresses included [1], Ability to advertise using a small space in booklet at good rates [1], Need to fill empty shops [1], Need a new department store where old Woolworths is [1], Lower parking charges [1], Need free parking to compete with Supermarkets [1], Need cheaper rates so we can reduce our retail prices [1], Move smoking areas away from shop doorways [1], I would be very interested in the outcome of your survey [1], Town has deteriorated radically in the last 10 years [1], Drink licenses have been dished out too easily [1], Poor traffic systems management [1], Street parking regime puts people off [1], Drink venues offer no quality or value for money [1], Drink venues breed trouble [1], Is a real shame the town has sunk so low [1], Our customers don't have a complimentary word to say about the town [1], Town is an embarrassment [1], There is literally nothing here [1], Too many Pound shops [2], Too many Charity shops [3], Hardshaw Centre is in dire need of a revamp; it hasn't changed in over 30 years [1], Church Square is empty since the removal of the greenery [1], Whole town seems as if it's dying [1], Is becoming a ghost town [1], Something drastic needs to be done to help smaller businesses and the Market [1], Need more help from the Council [1], We are trying to keep local people in jobs [1], Landlord is letting too many charity shops in at one end of town [1], Staff parking permits are way too high [1], Excessive Traffic Wardens [1], Groups committing anti-social behaviour [1], Poor parking [2], Lack of quality retailers [1], Not enough well-known names [1], Many are frightened to walk the streets [1], Seems to be an abundance of unsavoury types [1], NC major investors will come to St.Helens in its present state [1], It all comes back to one main problem - parking! [1], Need a good national department store [1], Need better parking facilities [1], Too many reps stopping shoppers - they do NOT like this [1], Price of parking is a big issue [1], Town loses shoppers due to us not having a Primark [1], Needs an overhaul; very depressing place [1], Not one quality restaurant [1], Should be free parking to encourage football [1], it's cheaper to get a train/bus to Liverpool than park here [1], Below average, depressing town [1], Too many empty units [1], Too many shops open then close in months [1], Too many smack heads and alcoholics [1], Council needs to get a grip of this place because it's dying [1], Better choice on retail park [1], Not enough big name high street shops [1], Parking restrictions are bad for business [1], Traffic wardens allow no leeway, even when loading/unloading [1], Businesses are not consulted on town issues/promotions [1], Anti-social behaviour at the YMCA lowers the tone of the area [1], Allow businesses to link with the Council website free of charge [1], Let businesses know of incentives [1], Shoot every member of the Planning department; then the town will grow [1], St.Helens - investment thwarted, dreams crushed [1]



EARLESTOWN TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

Questionnaires Distributed:

124

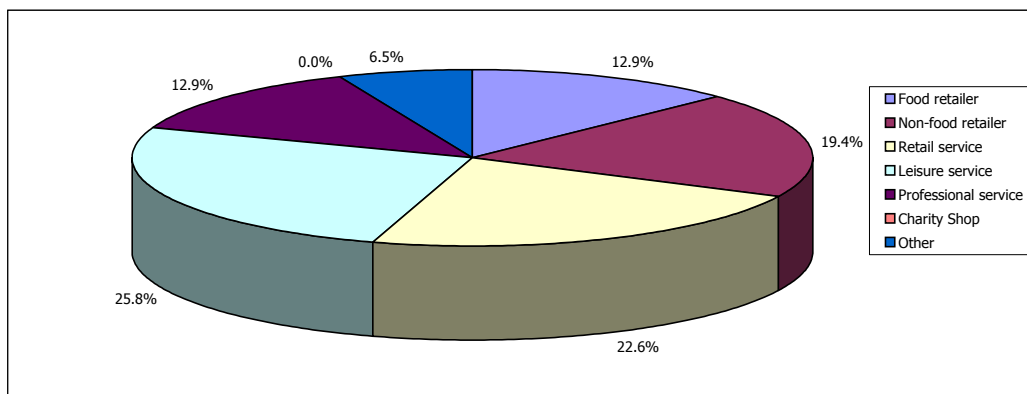
Responses: 31 (25%)

Q2. How would you best describe your business?

Food retailer	4	(12.9%)
Non-food retailer	6	(19.4%)
Retail service	7	(22.6%)
Leisure service	8	(25.8%)
Professional service	4	(12.9%)
Charity Shop	0	(0.0%)
Other	2	(6.5%)
	31	(100.0%)

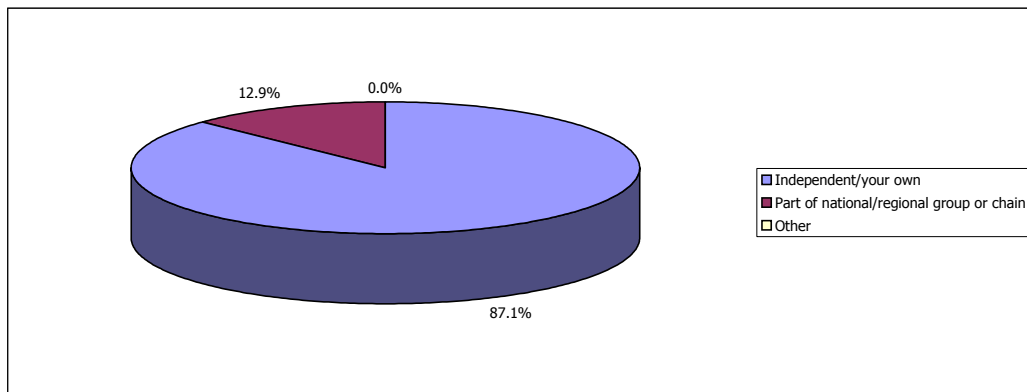
Other:

Furniture retailer and upholsterer [1], Pharmacy [1]



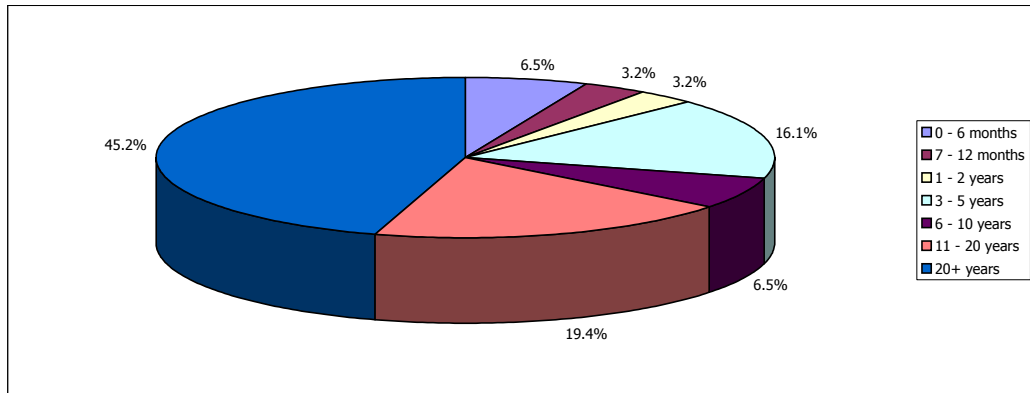
Q3. Is your business?

Independent/your own	27	(87.1%)
Part of national/regional group or chain	4	(12.9%)
Other	0	(0.0%)
	31	(100.0%)



Q4. How long, approximately, has the business traded in Earlestown Town Centre?

0 - 6 months	2	(6.5%)
7 - 12 months	1	(3.2%)
1 - 2 years	1	(3.2%)
3 - 5 years	5	(16.1%)
6 - 10 years	2	(6.5%)
11 - 20 years	6	(19.4%)
20+ years	14	(45.2%)
	31	(100.0%)



Q5. Why did you choose Earlestown Town Centre as a business location?

Live in Earlestown [2], Worked in shop for 12 years before taking it over [1], Existing business [1], Already trading [2], Were in the market for a fast food shop [1], Bought from previous owner [2], Appropriate market for business [4], Going concern within family [1], Inherited the practice [1], Taken over [1], Rent and rates were cheap [2], Free car parks [1], Local [2], For sale at right time [1], Used to be staff [1], I know the place [1], Purchased over eight years ago [1], Appropriate at the time of purchase [1], Unknown [1], Was a thriving Market town at the time [1], Good parking [1], Radially located from central warehouse [1], Worked in salon before taking over myself [1], Market trade [1], Cheaper rental properties compared to other centres nearby [1], Client base already in the area [1], No hairdressers in any other area at the time [1], Knew chap selling business [1]

Not Answered: 1

Q6. Are the business premises leased or owner occupied?

Leased	22	(71.0%)
Owner Occupied	7	(22.6%)
Don't Know	2	(6.5%)
Total	31	(100.0%)

Q7. How many staff does the business employ?

Full Time	48	(41.0%)
Part Time	69	(59.0%)
Total	117	(100.0%)

Other Answer Given:

1 Student [2], Work on my own [1]

Q8. Has the business always operated from Earlestown Town Centre?

Yes	28	(90.3%)
No	3	(9.7%)
Total	31	(100.0%)

If no, where did you relocate from?

Newton [1], St.Helens [1], Wigan [1]

Q9. During the time you have been trading in Earlestown Town Centre, has the business...?

Grown significantly	2	(6.5%)
Grown moderately	8	(25.8%)
Remained largely static	7	(22.6%)
Declined moderately	6	(19.4%)
Declined significantly	8	(25.8%)
Total	31	(100.0%)

Q10. How would you say that your business is currently performing?

Very Well	1	(3.2%)
Well	8	(25.8%)
Moderately	12	(38.7%)
Poorly	6	(19.4%)
Very Poorly	4	(12.9%)
Total	31	(100.0%)

Q11. What type of customers does your business rely on primarily?

Residents from in or around Earlestown Town Centre/Newton-le-Willows	20	(48.8%)
Residents from across the Borough	7	(17.1%)
Residents from outside the Borough	3	(7.3%)
Specialist buyers	3	(7.3%)
Workers from Earlestown Town Centre/Newton-le-Willows	4	(9.8%)
Students from nearby schools and colleges	1	(2.4%)
Passers-by	3	(7.3%)
Other	0	(0.0%)
Total	41	(100.0%)

Q12. How do you rate the following aspects of the Town Centre?

Transport

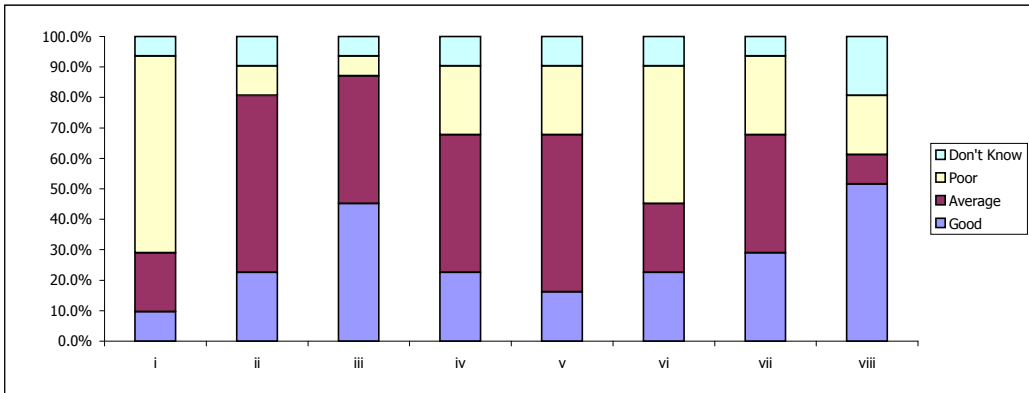
- i. Appearance of the entrances to Earlestown Town Centre
- ii. Accessibility by pedestrians
- iii. Accessibility by public transport
- iv. Accessibility by vehicles
- v. Amount of signage for vehicles
- vi. Amount of car parking
- vii. Location of car parking
- viii. Pricing of car parking

	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		31
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
i.	3	(9.68%)	6	(19.35%)	20	(64.52%)	2	(6.45%)	31
ii.	7	(22.58%)	18	(58.06%)	3	(9.68%)	3	(9.68%)	31
iii.	14	(45.16%)	13	(41.94%)	2	(6.45%)	2	(6.45%)	31
iv.	7	(22.58%)	14	(45.16%)	7	(22.58%)	3	(9.68%)	31
v.	5	(16.13%)	16	(51.61%)	7	(22.58%)	3	(9.68%)	31
vi.	7	(22.58%)	7	(22.58%)	14	(45.16%)	3	(9.68%)	31
vii.	9	(29.03%)	12	(38.71%)	8	(25.81%)	2	(6.45%)	31
viii.	16	(51.61%)	3	(9.68%)	6	(19.35%)	6	(19.35%)	31
	68		89		67		24		

Other:

Free car parking [1]

Good



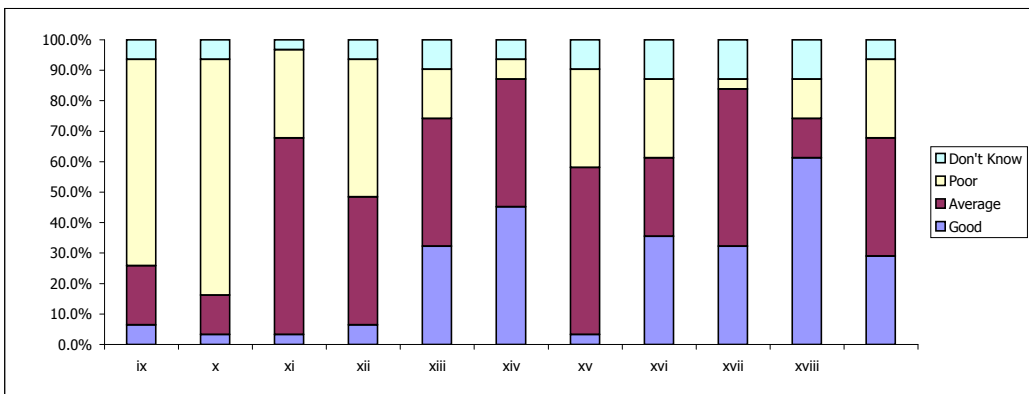
Business Offer

- ix. Number of shops in general
- x. Range of shops in general
- xi. Number of independent traders
- xii. Number of multiple traders
- xiii. Number of supermarkets
- xiv. Number of services in general
- xv. Range of services in general
- xvi. Number of restaurants
- xvii. Number of licensed premises
- xviii. Number of fast-food shops
- xix. Outdoor market

	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		31
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
ix.	2	(6.45%)	6	(19.35%)	21	(67.74%)	2	(6.45%)	31
x.	1	(3.23%)	4	(12.90%)	24	(77.42%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xi.	1	(3.23%)	20	(64.52%)	9	(29.03%)	1	(3.23%)	31
xii.	2	(6.45%)	13	(41.94%)	14	(45.16%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xiii.	10	(32.26%)	13	(41.94%)	5	(16.13%)	3	(9.68%)	31
xiv.	14	(45.16%)	13	(41.94%)	2	(6.45%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xv.	1	(3.23%)	17	(54.84%)	10	(32.26%)	3	(9.68%)	31
xvi.	11	(35.48%)	8	(25.81%)	8	(25.81%)	4	(12.90%)	31
xvii.	10	(32.26%)	16	(51.61%)	1	(3.23%)	4	(12.90%)	31
xviii.	19	(61.29%)	4	(12.90%)	4	(12.90%)	4	(12.90%)	31
xix.	9	(29.03%)	12	(38.71%)	8	(25.81%)	2	(6.45%)	31
	80		126		106		29		

Other:

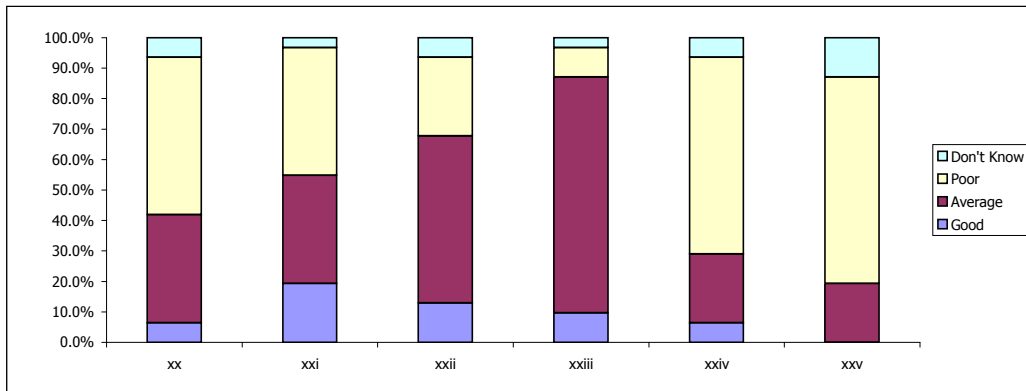
No comments



	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
xx. Attractiveness of the public realm	2	(6.45%)	11	(35.48%)	16	(51.61%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xxi. Cleanliness of the public realm	6	(19.35%)	11	(35.48%)	13	(41.94%)	1	(3.23%)	31
xxii. Safety within the public realm	4	(12.90%)	17	(54.84%)	8	(25.81%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xxiii. Amount of signage for pedestrians	3	(9.68%)	24	(77.42%)	3	(9.68%)	1	(3.23%)	31
xxiv. Number of events	2	(6.45%)	7	(22.58%)	20	(64.52%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xxv. Range of events	0	(0.00%)	6	(19.35%)	21	(67.74%)	4	(12.90%)	31
	17		76		81		12		

Other:

No comments

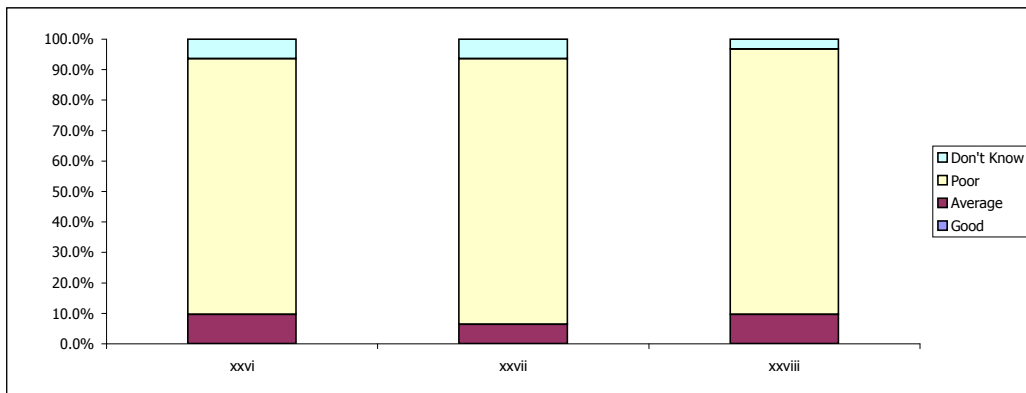


Other

	Good		Average		Poor		Don't Know		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
xxvi. Amount of marketing and promotion	0	(0.00%)	3	(9.68%)	26	(83.87%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xxvii. Range of marketing and promotion	0	(0.00%)	2	(6.45%)	27	(87.10%)	2	(6.45%)	31
xxviii. Image of Earlestown Town Centre	0	(0.00%)	3	(9.68%)	27	(87.10%)	1	(3.23%)	31
	0		8		80		5		

Other:

No comments



Comments:

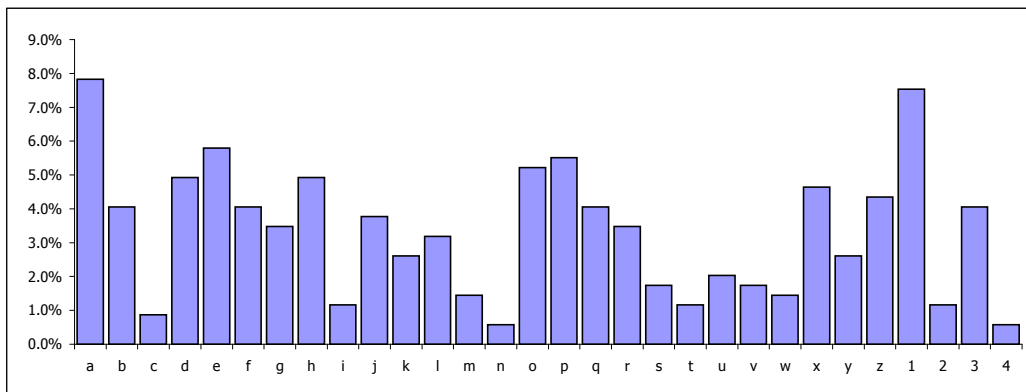
Promotion, i.e. Railway Markets (brown signs), is very poor outside the area [1], Would be better to have the Market trading on other days [1], Too many hairdressers [1], Too many fast food shops [2], No range of shops [1], St.Helens take the majority of budget leaving investment here minimal [1], Image of town is poor [1], The town is in fast decline [1], There is no attraction for visitors apart from the Markets [1], It's a pity the Parkside project never came off [1], There is no room for anymore cafés, otherwise there will be more shutters coming down [1], Too many restaurants [1], Image of town is as a drug capital [1], Town looks run down [1], Need more time spent on marketing and the Market in general [1]

Q13. What improvement measures would you like to see in the Town Centre?

	No	
a. Increased choice/range of shops	27	(7.83%)
b. More national multiples	14	(4.06%)
c. A new foodstore in the Town Centre	3	(0.87%)
d. A new department store in the Town Centre	17	(4.93%)
e. More independent/specialist traders	20	(5.80%)
f. Improved street paving	14	(4.06%)
g. Improved street furniture	12	(3.48%)
h. Improved built environment	17	(4.93%)
i. Lower parking charges	4	(1.16%)
j. More car parking	13	(3.77%)
k. Better mix of short/long stay parking	9	(2.61%)
l. More street cleaning	11	(3.19%)
m. Improved public transport	5	(1.45%)
n. Improved access by foot and cycle	2	(0.58%)
o. More entertainment/leisure facilities	18	(5.22%)
p. A new cinema	19	(5.51%)
q. A bowling alley	14	(4.06%)
r. A new sports centre	12	(3.48%)
s. A new leisure/splash pool	6	(1.74%)
t. More hotels	4	(1.16%)
u. More residential development	7	(2.03%)
v. More commercial offices	6	(1.74%)
w. More quality restaurants/pavement cafés	5	(1.45%)
x. More specialist markets	16	(4.64%)
y. More cultural facilities	9	(2.61%)
z. Improved security/CCTV	15	(4.35%)
1. Greater promotion/marketing of the centre	26	(7.54%)
2. Improved signposting	4	(1.16%)
3. Public toilets	14	(4.06%)
4. Other	2	(0.58%)
	345	(100.0%)

Other:

Less cafés [1], Less hairdressers [1], Less charity shops [1], More national clothes shops [1], Gym and Training Centre [1], A Farmers Market [1]



Q14. Do you think there is an appropriate mix of shops and other non-retail uses (e.g. banks, building societies, amusement arcades, cafés, pubs and restaurants, fast food outlets)?

Good Balance	7	(25.00%)
Too many non-retail uses	14	(50.00%)
Not enough non-retail uses	7	(25.00%)
	28	(100.0%)

Not Answered:

3

Comments:

Too many cafés [3], Too many charity shops [3], Too many empty shops [1], Too many fast foods [5], Too many hairdressers [3], Mens and kids clothes, etc. [1], No shops selling goods to attract visitors [1]

Q15. What, if anything, do you consider are the main barriers to the trading performance of your business?

a. High Rents/Overheads	13	(9.85%)
b. Lack of passing trade outside your premises	18	(13.64%)
c. Poor location of your premises	4	(3.03%)
d. Inadequate amount of customer car parking	10	(7.58%)
e. Price of car parking	2	(1.52%)
f. Competition from other traders in the Town Centre	6	(4.55%)

If so, where?

Food outlets [1], Supermarkets [1], Tesco [1], Netto [1], Morrison's [1], Card Factory (multiple) [1], All round Market area [1]

Not Answered: 1

g. Competition from out-of-centre stores in Earlestown	3	(2.27%)
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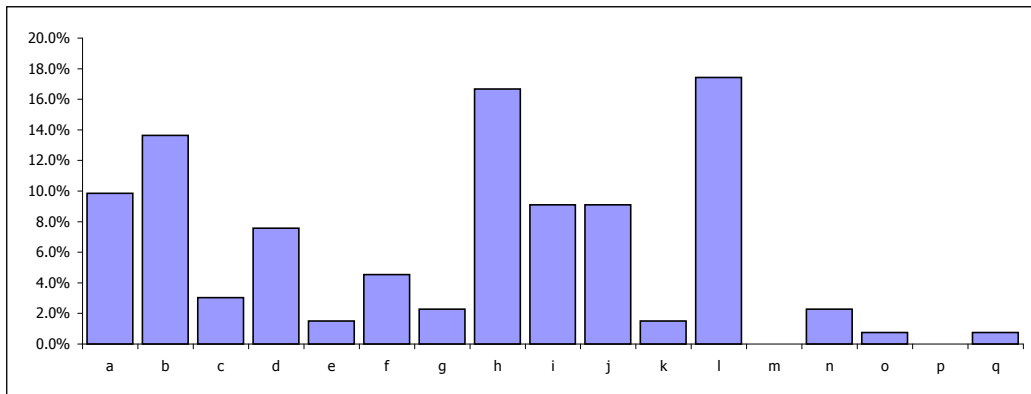
If so, where?

St.Helens [2], Warrington [1], Asda Superstore [1], Tesco Superstore [1]

h. Lack of day visitors/tourists to the town	22	(16.67%)
i. Anti-social behaviour	12	(9.09%)
j. Poor security/policing	12	(9.09%)
k. The inadequacy of your current premises	2	(1.52%)
l. Poor quality of Town Centre shopping environment	23	(17.42%)
m. Mail Order	0	(0.00%)
n. Internet	3	(2.27%)
o. Don't Know	1	(0.76%)
p. None	0	(0.00%)
q. Other	1	(0.76%)
Total	132	(100.0%)

Other:

Not much population [1], No transportation to Wigan or Bolton [1], Not enough retail outlets to entice customers [1], Limited shopping, so people go elsewhere [1], Too many hairdressers [1]



Q16. Have you any plans to alter your business in any way in the next five years?

No	11	(29.73%)
Yes, close	2	(5.41%)
Yes, relocate in Town Centre	1	(2.70%)
Yes, relocate to another Town Centre	5	(13.51%)
Yes, relocate out-of-centre	1	(2.70%)
Yes, extend floorspace	1	(2.70%)
Yes, reduce floorspace	0	(0.00%)
Yes, refurbish existing floorspace	4	(10.81%)
Yes, expand range of products	8	(21.62%)
Yes, other	4	(10.81%)
Total	37	(100.0%)

Other:

Close if business does not improve [1], Hoping to sell up within three years to pursue another business interest [1], Close if possible [1], Maybe relocate to another town centre [1]

If you are relocating, where are you considering moving to?

Not sure [1], Warrington [2], Cheshire [1], St.Helens [1], A nicer, safer area [1]

Not Answered: 3

If relocating, what is the main reason for this decision?

Not enough trade [1], More pleasant place to be [1], This is not a thriving place to have a business [1], Bigger premises [1], Lack of quality shoppers [1], No one investing in Earlestown [1], Earlestown has gone downhill [1], Overheads too expensive [1], Not enough passing trade [1], It is dead here [1]

17. Which centre(s) do you consider to be Earlestown's biggest competitor?

St.Helens [21], Warrington [11], Trafford Centre [1], Ashton-in-Makerfield [2], High Street [1], Ashton [1], Wigan [1], Leigh [1], All of them [1], Tesco [1]

Not Answered: 5

17a. Why do you consider this centre to be a competitor?

More variety of shops [7], Car parking [2], Better appearance [2], Better facilities [2], Better quality of Town Centre [1], Larger name shops [1], Most of the funding goes to St.Helens and none is left for us [1], Wider choice of shopping facilities [1], Bigger [1], No anti-social behaviour [1], More shops [3], Cleaner [1], Tidier [1], People very polite [1], Majority of investment goes into this town [1], More retailers [1], More facilities [1], St.Helens is being given funding to make it attractive; Earlestown is the poor relation [1], Larger choice [1], Better customers [1], Better shopping choice [1], Better environment [1], Shopping Mall [1], Cheap booze [1], Better shops [1], Safer [1], More inviting [1]

Not Answered: 7

Q18. Do you operate any other businesses in any other centres in St.Helens Borough?

Yes	6	(20.0%)
No	24	(80.0%)
	30	(100.0%)

Not Answered: 1

Q18a. If yes, where is this?

St.Helens [2], Bridge Street [1], Ravenhead, St.Helens [1], St.Helens/Sutton [1], Rainford [1]

Q18b. If yes, is this other business trading better, worse, or about the same?

Better	3	(75.0%)
Worse	0	(0.0%)
About the same	1	(25.0%)
	4	(100.0%)

Other Answer Given:

Unsure [2]

Q19. Does your business currently have its own website?

Yes	12	40.0%
No	18	60.0%
	30	100.0%

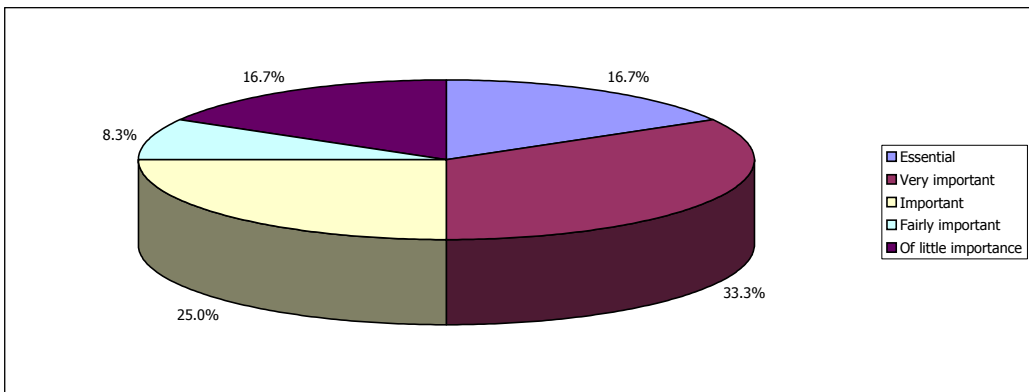
Not Answered: 1

Q19a. What services does your website provide to customers?

Ability to browse goods available at your premises	5	16.1%
Ability to order goods directly from the website	5	16.1%
Ability to order goods that will be delivered to a designated address	2	6.5%
Ability to order goods that can be picked up in store	3	9.7%
Contact information, e.g. telephone number, store locator, etc.	12	38.7%
Contact directly via e-mail	4	12.9%
	31	100.0%

Q19b. How important is your website to your business?

Essential	2	16.7%
Very important	4	33.3%
Important	3	25.0%
Fairly important	1	8.3%
Of little importance	2	16.7%
	12	100.0%



Q19c. Does your website attract customers from a wider catchment, i.e. beyond St.Helens?

Yes	8	72.7%
No	3	27.3%
	11	100.0%

Not Answered: 1

Q19d. Do customers visit your store as a result of browsing your website?

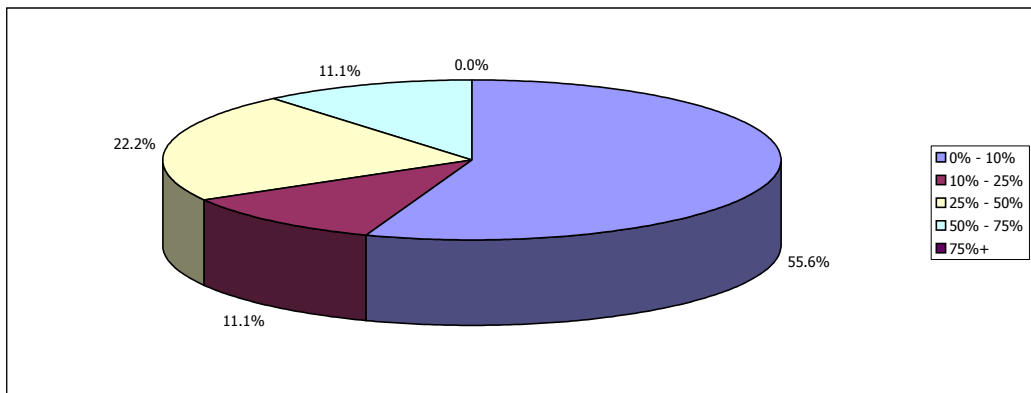
Yes	6	54.5%
No	5	45.5%
	11	100.0%

Not Answered: 1

Q19e. What proportion of your sales are from the internet?

0% - 10%	5	55.6%
10% - 25%	1	11.1%
25% - 50%	2	22.2%
50% - 75%	1	11.1%
75%+	0	0.0%
	9	100.0%

Not Answered: 3



Q20. Why do you not have a website?

Don't have a computer	2	12.5%
Not relevant/necessary	8	50.0%
Too expensive	1	6.3%
Too time consuming	2	12.5%
Do not have the skills to produce/run a website	0	0.0%
In the process of designing a website	3	18.8%
	16	100.0%

Not Answered: 4

If you have any further comments in regard to Earlestown Town Centre, please feel free to express your views below.

Need wider variety of shops [2], Shops cannot compete with the likes of Tesco [1], Need more attractions [1], Need another day market [2], Need specialised market [1], Need farmers market [1], Town has been slowly neglected over the past 20 years [1], Poor show to the investments made in St.Helens and Warrington [1], Work on the Market is sadly still not complete [1], We have a great deal to offer, if only we had a town that would support this [1], When empty shops do get taken on, they are either fast food or hairdressers! [1], Town has gone up and down in trade over the years [1], Town is presently not doing so badly as in times of recession people tend to shop locally [1], A lot of parking issues with fixed penalties being taken over by the Council [1], Zero tolerance policy on parking drives a lot of people away [1], My workmen are not allowed to park their van behind the shop and therefore can't access the equipment they need for the job [1], The Council needs to help us [1], We could be a specialist market town [1], We should get as much allocated to us for trimmings and ads at Christmas as St.Helens does [1], We pay as much rate as St.Helens does, but get nothing in return [1], Need better policing [1], Need to get rid of anti-social behaviour [2], Pub culture standing in pub doorways [1], Get rid of the parking attendants on their bikes, they are driving people away [1], Town is deteriorating at a rapid, depressing rate [1], Town is basically a dump [1], Used to be a bustling market place [1], Too many hairdressers [1], Nine hairdressers have opened within a one mile radius since I started trading! [1], Too many take aways [2], Too many sun bed shops [2], Too many cafés [2], It is not a place you would go for a walk around the shops - there aren't any shops! [1], Too many closed/boarded up shops [1], Main problem is alcoholics and drugs [1], No control from Police [1], Police do nothing when we report trouble [1], Not enough funding/investment going into the town [2], Not enough retailers [1], Not enough facilities [1], Need more clothes shops [1], Need less charity shops [1], Make the town more attractive [1], Every element of the shopping centre has significantly declined over the years [1], Overrun with low quality shops, i.e. charity, café, takeaway [1], Please promote us when promoting St.Helens, e.g. Christmas and Market Fayres [1], Post Office in the morning is a put off due to alcoholics getting their money [1], Alcoholics try to talk people into getting their booze for them when supermarkets refuse to let them in [1], Charity shop capital of the Borough [1], Disgustingly filthy Post Office [1], A town you would never go hungry in! [1], Dangerous traffic system [1], Parking - not enough places [1], What parking is available is being used up by commuters using the train [1], Town needs putting back on the map [1], Utilise Market Square for events like food shows, an ice rink, etc. [1], Loss of Woolworths has reduced attraction of the town [1], Lack of stalls on the Market [1], Town has lost the ability to attract people [1], People go straight to large towns and don't even bother with us [1], If there was a more varied selection of shops, it might encourage more visitors to the area [1], Earlestown needs help! [1], High overheads don't help small struggling businesses [1], Small businesses will close down if they don't get help, as they are struggling [1], Police never do anything about the druggies hanging around the phone box each morning [1], Anti-social feral children run about free reign [1], Market Street is meant to be pedestrianised; cars go up and down it regularly, in particular the Police when they want food from Greggs [1], Zero tolerance is required [1]