



2023

SUMMER

# SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL TOWN CENTRE & RETAIL SURVEY

## Contents

Glossary.....	3
Key Findings .....	4
Introduction .....	5
Policy Content.....	6
Methodology.....	7
Summer 2023 Results .....	8
Table 1: Settlement unit and floorspace vacancy rates summer 2023 .....	8
Trends .....	9
Table 2: Unit vacancy rates over past five years (including comparison of original units with all units).....	9
Figure 1: Unit vacancy rates of seven largest towns, summer 2009 to summer 2023 .....	10
Tables 3: Vacancy rates etc. over time (source of UK rates: LDC), (S=Summer; W=Winter) .....	12
Figure 2: Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate against UK online retail sales, summer 2008 to summer 2023	13
Chains/Multiples.....	13
Table 4: Number and proportion of chains/multiples shops/offices, summer 2023 .....	14
Use Classes.....	15
Figure 3: Mix of uses across all surveyed town centres, summer 2023 .....	15
Figure 3A: Use Class 1A and retail units within each settlement summer 2023.....	16
Figures 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F: Types of businesses in use class 1A units, summer 2023 .....	17
Floorspace .....	20
Table 5: Floorspace data for use class 1A, (rounded to nearest 100).....	20
Figure 4: Location of Town Centre floorspace, summer 2023 .....	21
Table 6: Performance by unit floorspace volume, summer 2023 * .....	22
Charity Shops .....	22
Table 7: Number of retail units and number operating as charity shops, summer 2023 .....	22
Supporting Town Centre Viability.....	23
Figure 5: Comparison of vacancy rates, summer 2023 .....	23
Town Centre Health Checks .....	24
Table 8: Population counts from the 2021 census.....	25
Figure 6: Town Centre Vitality Ratings summer 2023.....	25
Long-Term Vacancy.....	26
Figure 7: Town centre vacancy rates by vacancy length summer 2023.....	26
Table 9: Long term (5 yrs +) vacant units and long-term vacancy rates, summer 2023 .....	26
Conclusions .....	27
Appendix 1 – Methodology.....	28
Appendix 2 – Use Categorisation.....	30

Table 1.2: Use class orders included in the survey .....	30
Appendix 3 – Town Centre Health Checklist.....	33

## Glossary

<b>Additional units</b>	Units in use classes 4, 8, 10 & 11 included for the first time as part of the summer 2023 survey.
<b>All units</b>	All units included in the survey from summer 2023 – use classes 1A, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11 and sui generis.
<b>Central retail district</b>	The survey covers a single designated central retail district for each town, except Galashiels where both the town centre and a second centre are monitored.
<b>Core Activity Area</b>	Policy ED4 identifies Core Activity Areas within a number of town centres. In order to support the vitality and viability of Core Activity Areas, acceptable uses are restricted.
<b>Original units</b>	Units included in the survey prior to the summer 2023 audit – includes use classes 1, 2, 3, 7 and sui generis.
<b>Retail units</b>	Refers to units originally in the redundant use class 1.
<b>Town Centre boundary</b>	Boundaries designated in the Local Development Plan for the nine largest towns.
<b>Units</b>	Generic term for units included in the survey.

## Key Findings

- The Summer 2023 Town Centre and Retail Survey is the first survey to be undertaken following the publication of Scotland's National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Use Class Order 2023. These policy and regulation changes highlight the cluster of uses in town centres and their contribution to town centre vitality.
- The 'vacancy rate' will refer to the original units' vacancy rate unless stated otherwise. This is to ensure that the findings are comparable with previous surveys.
- As a result of these changes, 155 additional units were recorded in the summer 2023 survey: ranging from museums to community clubs to places of worship.
- The overall Scottish Borders unit vacancy is 13%. The vacancy rate, including the additional use classes (4, 8, 10 & 11), is 12%.
- The average floor-space vacancy rate stands at 10%; floorspace is only measured for use class 1A (shops and financial & professional services).
- The Scottish Borders has a slightly higher vacancy rate than the Scottish average unit vacancy rate of 12.4% but is below the UK's average unit vacancy rate of 13.9% (source: Local Data Company 2023). The Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate remains well above the low of 7% recorded before the economic downturn.
- In the two largest towns, Galashiels' unit vacancy rate has decreased, for the second survey in a row, by 1% to 17% (the vacancy rate is the same for both original units surveyed, and all units surveyed including the additional units). Hawick's unit vacancy rate has increased by 1% to 17%; the vacancy rate, including the additional units is 15%.
- Tweedbank (33% = 1 unit only) and Newtown St. Boswells (36% = 4 units only) recorded the highest unit vacancy rates. They have a relatively small number of units and, therefore, any increase, or decrease, in property vacancies can significantly affect the overall percentage total.
- St Boswells is the only town to have no vacant units; the same as in the surveys of 2022. Kelso (3%) and Peebles (4%) have the lowest unit vacancy rates. Earlston and Lauder at 6%, also have very low vacancy rates.
- There are 33 town centre charity shops, which is the same number as the Winter 2022 audit.
- Duns has the highest long-term vacancy rate (9%), and Hawick has the highest number of long-term vacant units (11). For the purposes of this study, long-term vacancy applies to units vacant for five years or longer.

## Introduction

- 1.1 Previously, since 2007, this report set out the results of the Council's bi-annual survey of **ground floor town centre units** within eighteen Scottish Borders' settlements. The purpose of the study was, and is still, to monitor town centre health and is used to inform the Council's town centre planning policies.
- 1.2 Since 2007 retail units, food outlets, holiday accommodation (hotels, B&Bs & hostels) and public facing offices for professional services were counted to monitor how well town centres were performing.
- 1.3 The units being surveyed now include other businesses and uses (within use class 4, see below), residential institutions (*e.g.* care homes; use class 8), non-residential institutions (*e.g.* creches, community halls; use class 10) and places of assembly & leisure (*e.g.* cinemas, bowling clubs; use class 11).
- 1.4 The town centres covered by the study are those with a population of over 1000, namely:

Chirnside	Kelso
Coldstream	Lauder
Duns	Melrose
Earlston	Newtown St Boswells
Eyemouth	Peebles
Galashiels (town centre & 2nd centre) *	Selkirk
Hawick	St Boswells
Innerleithen	Tweedbank
Jedburgh	West Linton

***\*Two centres are monitored in Galashiels, the town centre and a second centre at Wilderhaugh. Where this report refers to Galashiels this will always refer to Galashiels town centre only, unless stated otherwise.***

## Policy Content

- 2.1 The [National Planning Framework 4](#) (NPF4) was adopted by Scottish Ministers on 13 February 2023, replacing National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy. NPF4 incorporates updated Scottish Planning Policy, containing detailed national policy on a range of planning topics. NPF4 now forms part of the Development Plan, alongside the adopted Local Development Plan (2016).
- 2.2 Policy 27 intends to encourage, promote and facilitate development in our city and town centres, recognising they are a national asset. Furthermore, Policy 27 maintains the policy stance of a Town Centre First approach, with desired outcomes focusing on vibrant and healthy places for people to live, learn, work, enjoy and visit. A Town Centre First approach is the focus of town centre policy, which encourages a flexible mix of footfall generating uses, to maintain vitality and viability within town centres.
- 2.3 At a local level, the Council's current Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in May 2016. The LDP sets out Policy ED4 Core Activity Areas in Town Centres; the policy encourages retail and food units, which increase footfall within the central part of town centres, encouraging greater town centre activity.
- 2.4 In July 2018, the Planning and Building Standards Committee agreed approval of a [Town Centre Core Activity Area Pilot](#) scheme. The pilot scheme operated for an initial one-year period. The primary purpose of the pilot scheme was to examine ways to revitalise and reinvigorate the town centres of Hawick and Galashiels by considering options to add more flexibility to Policy ED4 within the adopted LDP, which is aimed at protecting Core Activity Areas within these towns. In essence, the approved pilot scheme removed the Core Activity Area in Hawick and, whilst retaining the Core Activity Area in Galashiels, proposed a wider and more flexible range of uses, which could be supported.
- 2.5 The pilot scheme outlined further guidance, in relation to Policy ED4, for planning application proposals in other Core Activity Areas within Scottish Borders towns (*i.e.* Galashiels, Peebles, Kelso, Melrose, Jedburgh, Selkirk, Eyemouth and Duns). As the pilot scheme removed the Core Activity Area from Hawick, this would not be relevant to Hawick. An example of the guidance is that if premises had been vacant for 6 months and evidence was submitted, which confirmed it had been adequately advertised for a substantial period of that time, then that would carry much weight in the decision-making process. Policy ED4 also referred to the need to give consideration of any "significant positive contribution", in relation to proposals within the Core Activity Area, and the pilot scheme expanded upon examples of what factors determine "significant positive contribution".
- 2.6 The Planning & Building Standards Committee agreed that the pilot study should remain in place until the new retail policy is adopted as part of the next LDP. It should be noted that the Proposed LDP has been subject to Examination with the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) and is expected to be adopted in 2024. Policy ED4 (Core Activity Areas in Town Centres) was reviewed as part of the Proposed LDP process. The review of Policy ED4 took into consideration feedback from the pilot study outlined above. Policy ED4 has been revised as part of the Proposed LDP to remove the Core Activity Areas for Hawick and Stow. The Galashiels Core Activity Area has been reduced in size to include

only Bank Street and part of Market Street. Channel Street and Douglas Bridge have been removed from this designation. As the Core Activity Areas for Kelso, Melrose and Peebles continue to perform at a comparatively high level, there is less requirement for additional flexibility of uses.

- 2.7 Since the survey began in 2007 this is the first Town Centre and Retail Survey, in the Scottish Borders, to include some changes to the methodology, as described below. Surveys and reporting will now be informed by the policy requirements set out within NPF4 and the implications of the recent update to the Use Class Order (UCO). The new UCO supersedes the former UCO (Scotland) 1997. The most significant change, in relation to this survey report, is that Use Class 1A now covers shops and financial & professional services.

## Methodology

- 3.1 The survey covers the town centre of each of the surveyed settlements; explained in detail in Appendix 1. Units that fall out with these areas are not included within the survey. Ground floor units operating within the use classes listed below are monitored, see below for more detailed information.

- Class 1A - shops, financial, professional and other services
- Class 3 - food and drink
- Class 4 – business
- Class 7 - hotels and hostels
- Class 8 – residential institutions
- Class 10 - non-residential institutions
- Class 11 - assembly & leisure
- Sui generis

Those found to have changed to other uses out with this list, since the previous survey, are not counted in the results, for example, units re-purposed for residential use class 9.

- 3.2 Town centre floorspace for use class 1A is also monitored through the survey. This data is based on information from the Scottish Assessors (see Appendix 1 for full survey methodology) and enables a more complete assessment of town centre retail performance than unit vacancy rates alone. Whilst some towns may have high unit vacancy rates, they may hold lower floorspace vacancy rates, or vice versa.
- 3.3 Following changes to Hawick's town centre boundary, as designated in the adopted Local Development Plan 2016, the town centre boundary now extends across the River Teviot.



## Summer 2023 Results

- 4.1 Since 2007, the results of the survey have focused on Use Classes 1, 2, 3 and 7, namely shops, professional services, food vendors and hotels/B&Bs, respectively. Shop types and floorspace were analysed in even greater detail than the other unit types; however, the other use classes surveyed will also be included in the report.
- 4.2 In total, 1552 units were counted, the additional use classes comprise 155 (10%) of these units; 183 of all units were vacant at the time of surveying, only 4 of the vacant units fall within the additional use classes. The overall Scottish Borders vacancy rate is 13%, the vacancy rate including the additional units is 1% lower at 12%. The floorspace vacancy rate is 10%.
- 4.3 Settlement vacancy rates vary, Newtown St Boswells (36%), Tweedbank (33%), and Chirside (22%) recorded the highest vacancy rates; Table 1 shows that some settlements have a relatively small number of units and, therefore, any increase or decrease in vacancy can significantly affect the overall percentage total. Galashiels (including Galashiels 2nd centre) and Hawick together account for 52% of all vacant units. No vacant units were recorded in St Boswells, though this settlement has a relatively low number of units overall (16), compared to other settlements.
- 4.4 Tables 1, 2 & 3 show the vacancy rates for both original units and all units surveyed. This is to maintain consistency in monitoring and like for like comparisons.
- 4.5 Table 1 presents the summer 2023 results for the number of units per settlement; the number of vacant units per settlement (for both original units and all units); unit vacancy rates per settlement (for both original units and all units); and floorspace vacancy rates per settlement (floorspace only includes use class 1A).

Table 1: Settlement unit and floorspace vacancy rates summer 2023

Settlement	Units	Original units vacant	All units vacant	Original units vacancy rate	All units vacancy rate	*Floorspace vacancy rate
Chirside	10	2	2	22%	20%	58%
Coldstream	42	5	5	14%	12%	9%
Duns	65	12	12	21%	18%	20%
Earlston	19	1	1	6%	5%	10%
Eyemouth	75	8	8	13%	11%	7%
Galashiels	252	41	43	17%	17%	13%
Galashiels 2nd	46	7	9	18%	20%	8%
Hawick	295	43	43	17%	15%	10%
Innerleithen	57	7	7	13%	12%	17%
Jedburgh	97	11	11	13%	11%	11%
Kelso	189	6	6	3%	3%	2%
Lauder	20	1	1	6%	5%	0%
Melrose	83	8	8	10%	10%	7%
Newtown St Boswells	11	4	4	36%	36%	16%
Peebles	153	6	6	4%	4%	2%
Selkirk	103	15	15	16%	15%	21%
St Boswells	16	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Tweedbank	3	1	1	33%	33%	0%
West Linton	16	1	1	8%	6%	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1552</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>

\*Floorspace takes account of use class 1A only.

## Trends

- 5.1 Table 2 shows the changes in unit vacancy rates over the past five years. Since the last audit, unit vacancy rates, in original units, have gone down in five settlements. Original unit vacancy rates decreased in Chirnside, Galashiels, Innerleithen, Jedburgh and Kelso; at 3% Chirnside and Jedburgh showed the greatest decrease in vacancy rate. Eleven settlements show that the vacancy rate is less when all units are included. This can be an indicator that the town centre use, and vitality, is increased by these additional units.

Table 2: Unit vacancy rates over past five years (including comparison of original units with all units)

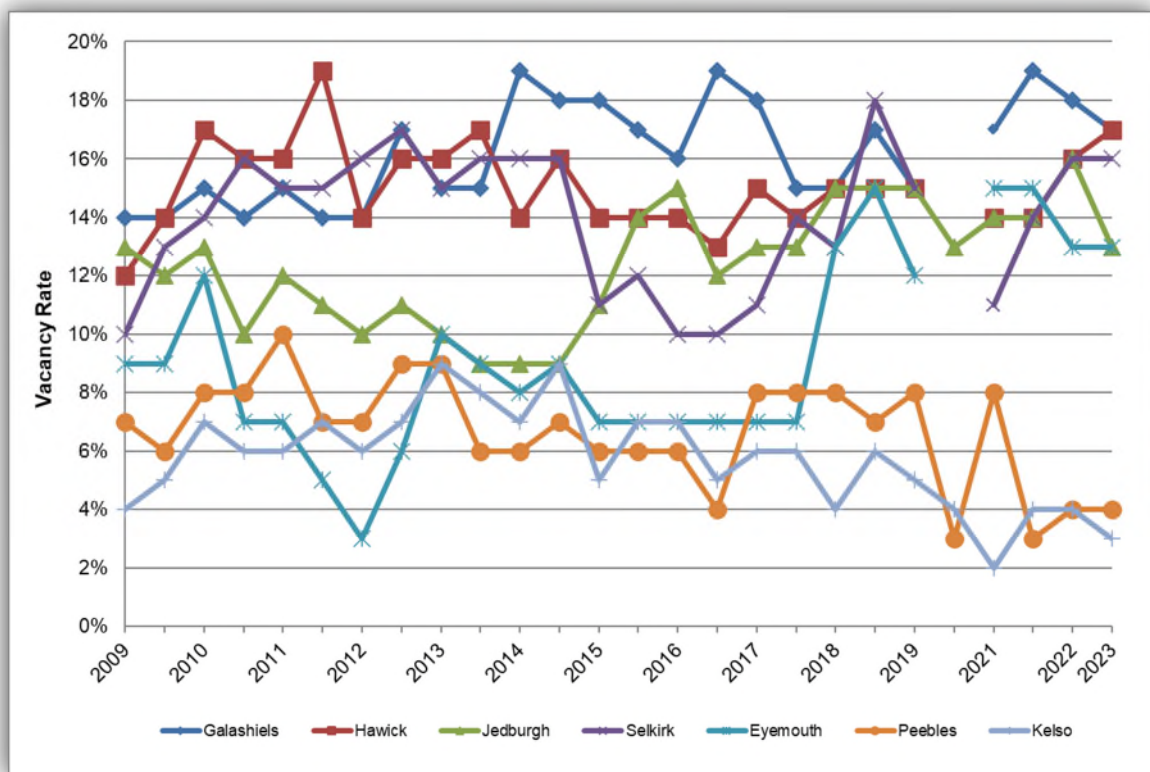
Settlement	S 2019	W 2019	S 2020	W 2020	S 2021	W 2021	S 2022	W 2022	Original units S 2023	All units S 2023
Chirnside	11%	*	*	*	22%	*	13%	25%	22%	20%
Coldstream	15%	*	*	*	8%	*	11%	14%	14%	12%
Duns	15%	*	*	*	15%	*	17%	19%	21%	18%
Earlston	0%	0	*	*	0%	*	0%	0%	6%	5%
Eyemouth	12%	*	*	*	15%	*	15%	13%	13%	11%
Galashiels	15%	*	*	*	17%	*	19%	18%	17%	17%
Galashiels 2nd centre	14%	*	*	*	12%	*	14%	13%	18%	20%
Hawick	15%	*	*	*	14%	*	14%	16%	17%	15%
Innerleithen	8%	8%	*	*	13%	*	15%	14%	13%	12%
Jedburgh	15%	13%	*	*	14%	*	14%	16%	13%	11%
Kelso	5%	4%	*	*	2%	*	4%	4%	3%	3%
Lauder	22%	18%	*	*	0%	*	0%	6%	6%	5%
Melrose	5%	8%	*	*	4%	*	5%	6%	10%	10%
Newtown St Boswells	8%	23%	*	*	25%	*	27%	36%	36%	36%
Peebles	8%	3%	*	*	8%	*	3%	4%	4%	4%
Selkirk	15%	*	*	*	11%	*	14%	16%	16%	15%
St Boswells	0%	0%	*	*	0%	*	0%	0%	0%	0%
Tweedbank	0%	0%	*	*	33%	*	67%	33%	33%	33%
West Linton	8%	17%	*	*	17%	*	8%	8%	8%	6%

\*Not completed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- 5.2 Figure 1 shows the longer-term results for the seven largest towns by population. The unit vacancy rate in **Galashiels** has decreased by 1% since the last audit in winter 2022 and by 2% since summer 2022. Over a five-year period, there have been fluctuations in the figures with a high of 19% and a low of 15% in summer 2019. The figure of 17%, recorded in the latest audit, shows the vacancy has remained above the Scottish Borders unit vacancy of 13%. There are a cluster of vacant units around and near Douglas Bridge, top of Channel Street and North West end of the High Street. Much of the remaining vacant units are interspersed throughout the town centre. **Galashiels 2<sup>nd</sup> Centre (Wilderhaugh)** has had a marked increase in vacancy rates from winter 2022 to summer 2023, vacant units increased from 6 (13%) to 7 (18%). There are only 40 units in Galashiels 2<sup>nd</sup> centre, therefore, vacant units create steeper percentage rises. The current total vacant floorspace is 8%, up from a very low 2% in winter 2022.

5.3 **Hawick's** town centre expanded following the adoption of the Council's Local Development Plan (2016) to include an additional eleven units north of the River Teviot. The unit vacancy rate in Hawick had stayed between 14-15% since the Summer 2018 audit, however, the last audit (winter 2022) recorded a vacancy rate of 16%. With the inclusion of the additional units surveyed, the unit vacancy rate sat at 15%, however, the vacancy rate of the original units surveyed has risen to 17%. Hawick has a much higher number of use class 10 & 11 than other Borders towns, including Galashiels. This can be a positive indicator in a town as it relates to several criteria (e.g. social interaction and identity & belonging) in the [Place Standard tool](#). Generally, the vacancies are interspersed throughout the High Street, Buccleuch Street and North Bridge Street; of the units west of the River Teviot, around Commercial Road, none are vacant. The town's floorspace vacancy rate is 10%, therefore, although the unit vacancy rate is higher, the floorspace vacancy rate is lower. Hawick's town centre performance will continue to be monitored closely going forward as the Council's Hawick Action Plan continues to take effect. Through the Town Centre Core Activity Area Pilot Study, the Core Activity Area in Hawick was removed for a trial period of a year and will be extended until the new Local Development Plan is adopted. The Hawick Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) is anticipated to help regenerate the town centre.

Figure 1: Unit vacancy rates of seven largest towns, summer 2009 to summer 2023



Note: the gaps show that no survey data was collected in 2020 & 2021 for these towns

5.4 **Peebles** has consistently recorded a lower-than-average unit vacancy rate, which rose to 4% in the winter 2022 audit and remains at 4% for the summer 2023 audit; though still well below the Scottish Borders average of 12%. Peebles town centre is still considered to be performing well.

- 5.5 **Kelso** also has recorded a very low unit vacancy rate of 3% down 1% from the last two consecutive audits. Kelso has repeatedly recorded a lower-than-average vacancy rate in comparison to the Scottish Borders average and continues to perform well.
- 5.6 **Jedburgh's** unit vacancy has fluctuated between 13-15% since the summer 2018 audit. In the last audit the retail unit vacancy rate was at 16%, the highest it has been in 5 years. However, this audit noted that the vacancy rate had decreased to 13%; considering all units the vacancy rate is 11%. The floorspace vacancy rate has decreased by 2%, for the second audit in a row, to 11%; Jedburgh will be closely monitored going forward.
- 5.7 **Selkirk's** unit vacancy rate had risen from 11% in 2021 to 16% in winter 2022. This survey showed the unit vacancy rate as remaining at 16%; considering all units the rate is 15%. Selkirk's floorspace vacancy rate has remained at 21%. Selkirk received funding through the Selkirk Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). The scheme gave grants for qualifying buildings in the conservation area to do external repairs; in conjunction with an upgraded streetscape. The scheme ended March 2018.
- 5.8 **Eyemouth's** unit vacancy rate has remained at 13%; considering all units the rate is 11%. Eyemouth's floorspace vacancy rate is much lower at 7%. Eyemouth has recently received £400k through the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme for redevelopment of the waterfront.
- 5.9 Turning to the towns not shown in figure 1, **Coldstream's** unit vacancy rate has remained at 14% (5 units) in this audit; although, taking into account all units surveyed the unit vacancy rate sits at 12%. The town's floorspace vacancy rate has risen to 9% from 8% in the last audit.
- 5.10 **Innerleithen's** unit vacancy rate has decreased by 1% to 13% since the last audit, and considering all units surveyed the rate is 12%.
- 5.11 **Earlston's** vacancy rate has risen from 0%, in the last survey, to 6% (1 unit) in the current audit, see Table 2.
- 5.12 The unit vacancy rate of **Duns** has increased by 2% for the third consecutive audit to 21%, however, including all units the vacancy rate is 18%.
- 5.13 **Lauder's** unit vacancy rate decreased from highs of 22% in the summers of 2018 and 2019, to 0% in the summer 2022 survey. Lauder still has 1 unit vacant in this audit making the vacancy rate 6%; Lauder has 20 units in total.
- 5.14 **Melrose's** vacancy rate has increased from 6% to 10% for the second consecutive audit. Melrose is continuing to perform well and has consistently been below the Scottish Borders average, however, this is the highest vacancy rate recorded in the last five years.
- 5.15 Table 2 shows significant fluctuations in the unit vacancy rates of **Chirnside, Newtown St Boswells** and **Tweedbank**, although these results, in part, simply reflect the low numbers of units in these settlements. This means any change in occupancy of a single unit has a significant effect on vacancy rate as a percentage.
- 5.16 **West Linton's** high vacancy rate of 17% in summer 2021 is only equal to 2 units, for two consecutive surveys the vacancy rate dropped to 8% (original units). **St Boswells** recorded a vacancy rate of 0%, which it has maintained since at least summer 2018 (no data in 2020 and winter 2021).

5.17 In **comparison to the rest of the UK**, Table 3 shows the overall Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate alongside the UK average unit vacancy rate over the last five years (source: Local Data Company). The table shows that the Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate is currently 1% lower than the UK average vacancy rate.

Table 3: Vacancy rates etc. over time (source of UK rates: LDC), (S=Summer; W=Winter)

	W 2018	S 2019	W 2019	S 2020	W 2020	S 2021	W 2021	S 2022	W 2022	S 2023 original units	S 2023 all units
<b>Borders vacancy rate</b>	12%	12%	*	**	**	11%	**	12%	13%	13%	12%
<b>UK vacancy rate</b>	12%	13%	*	**	**	15%	**	14%	14%	14%	14%
<b>Units (class 1-3, 7) from 2023 (class 1A, 3, 7)</b>	1424	1417	*	**	**	1402	**	1401	1384	1397	1552
<b>Vacant units</b>	173	165	*	**	**	160	**	167	175	179	183

\* The Winter 2019 audit was only partly completed, so no figures given.

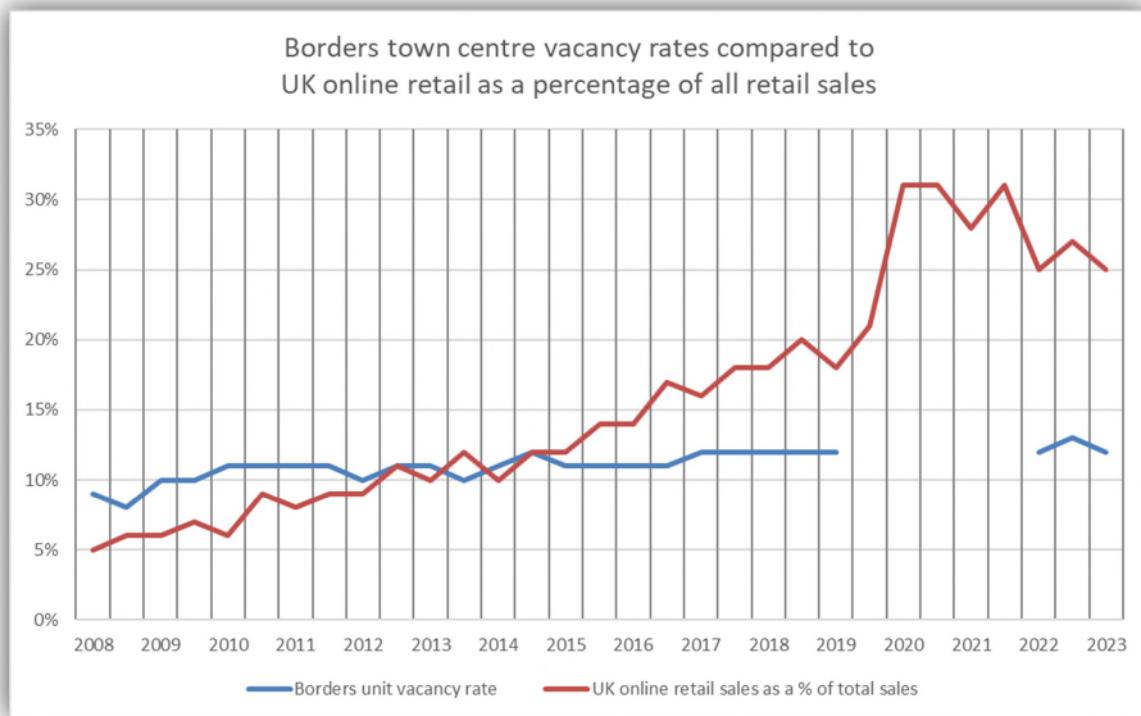
\*\* Covid-19 restrictions and advice prevented surveys being completed in 2020 & winter 2021.

5.9 Figure 2 presents the overall Scottish Borders vacancy rate since winter 2008. This is shown against online retail sales, as a percentage of total UK retail sales, during the same period; the points for online retail sales in the graph, were taken from the data for June of each year. The graph illustrates the relationship between unit vacancy rates and the exponential rise in online retail sales, especially just prior to and at the time of the first COVID-19 lockdown period.

5.10 Online retailing indicates a change in consumer behaviour, and businesses with an established online presence, or ability to rapidly develop one, during the COVID-19 lockdowns, were able to capture consumer spending that switched online. During the pandemic, 4% of businesses in the UK started selling online for the first time; the arts, entertainment & recreation and wholesale & retail trade experienced the highest percentage rise (34% in each sector) in online sales in 2020.

5.11 The graph shows that the vacancy rate increased quickly in the early recessionary stages of the economic downturn but has not decreased back to previous levels of 8-9% since, despite the drop in online retail sales. The missing data from 2020 and 2021 would likely have illustrated the correlation between the exponential rise in online sales and the corresponding drop in occupancy rates in town centres. Internet sales, as a percentage of total retail sales, fell from a high of 37% in January 2021 to 25.2% in February 2023 (Office of National Statistics).

Figure 2: Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate against UK online retail sales, summer 2008 to summer 2023



Note: the break in the vacancy rate line is the result of no data being collected in winter 2019, 2020 and winter 2021.

## Chains/Multiples

6.1 Existence of chains, or multiple shops/offices, can be an indicator of external industry confidence in a town centre, whilst high numbers of local independent shops can be an indicator of local confidence in a town centre and can be attractive to visitors. Table 4 lists the number of chain shops/offices per town centre and the proportion of shops/offices, which are operated by parent companies. This data covers use class 1A only; sui generis uses are excluded. The definition of chain shops/offices covers both regional and national chains, and smaller, local, multiple shop/office chains. Overall, 21% of all class 1A units (221 units) are operated by a parent company; the highest proportion of chains/multiples (excluding Tweedbank, which only has 2 use class 1A units) is in Galashiels 2<sup>nd</sup> Centre at Wilderhaugh.

Table 4: Number and proportion of shops/offices (use class 1A only) which are chains/multiples, summer 2023

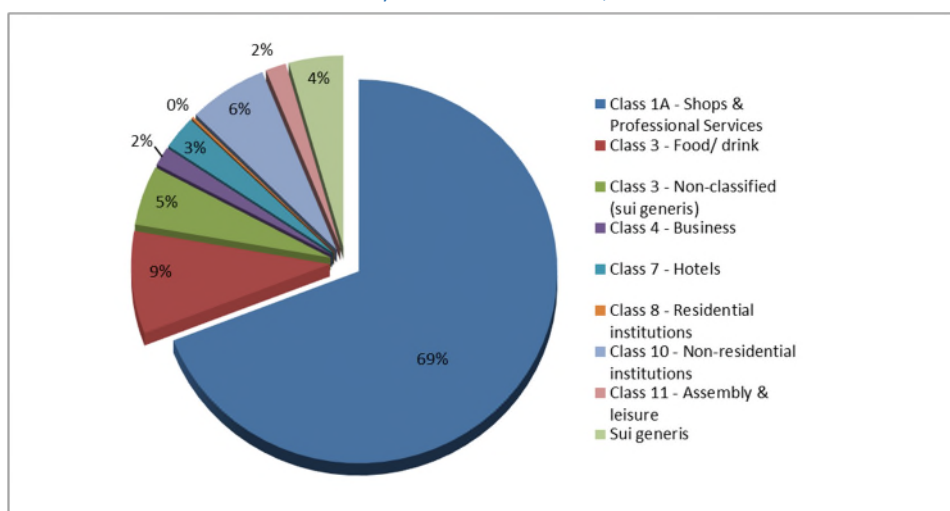
Settlement	Chains/Multiples CLASS1A	CLASS 1A UNITS	% Chains/multiples shops/offices
CHIRNSIDE	1	5	20%
COLDSTREAM	2	25	8%
DUNS	5	43	12%
EARLSTON	3	10	30%
EYEMOUTH	6	38	16%
GALASHIELS	56	191	29%
GALASHIELS 2nd Centre	11	32	34%
HAWICK	34	199	17%
INNERLEITHEN	2	38	5%
JEDBURGH	10	65	15%
KELSO	37	141	26%
LAUDER	1	11	9%
MELROSE	12	63	19%
NEWTOWN ST BOSWELLS	2	10	20%
PEEBLES	25	111	23%
SELKIRK	9	70	13%
ST BOSWELLS	2	8	25%
TWEEDBANK	1	2	50%
WEST LINTON	2	11	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>1073</b>	<b>21%</b>

Note: some of the smaller settlements seem to have a high proportion of chains/multiples. They have a small number of units, therefore, the percentage is misleadingly high (Earlston, Newtown St. Boswells & Tweedbank).

## Use Classes

- 7.1 The town centre survey categorises units by their use in planning law, as defined through the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 (as amended), and also by the Council's own categorisation system. Only units operating within the following use class categories are monitored through the survey:
- Class 1A - shops, financial, professional and other services
  - Class 3 - food and drink; class 3-non classified (sui generis)
  - Class 4 - business
  - Class 7 - hotels and hostels
  - Class 8 – residential institutions
  - Class 10 - non-residential institutions
  - Class 11 - assembly & leisure
  - Sui generis
- 7.2 These categories are explained in further detail in Appendix 2. By categorising the units by use class it is possible to establish whether a particular type of unit is in decline and where concentrations of use classes are located.
- 7.3 1073 surveyed units in the Borders operate as shops and professional services (use class 1A), 134 units are restaurants or cafes (use class 3) and 100 are a combination of town halls, community centres, museums or other uses within use class 10, including children's nurseries; the rest of the surveyed units are made up of use classes 4, 7 and 11 and 69 sui generis units (unclassified uses).
- 7.4 Figure 3 shows the mix of uses across all of the town centres and shows that the majority of units (69%) operate as shops and professional services (use class 1A). Class 3 sui generis (hot food takeaways and public houses) is shown as a separate figure (5%) from sui generis (9%) because these units make up more than half of the sui generis units surveyed.

Figure 3: Mix of uses across all surveyed town centres, summer 2023

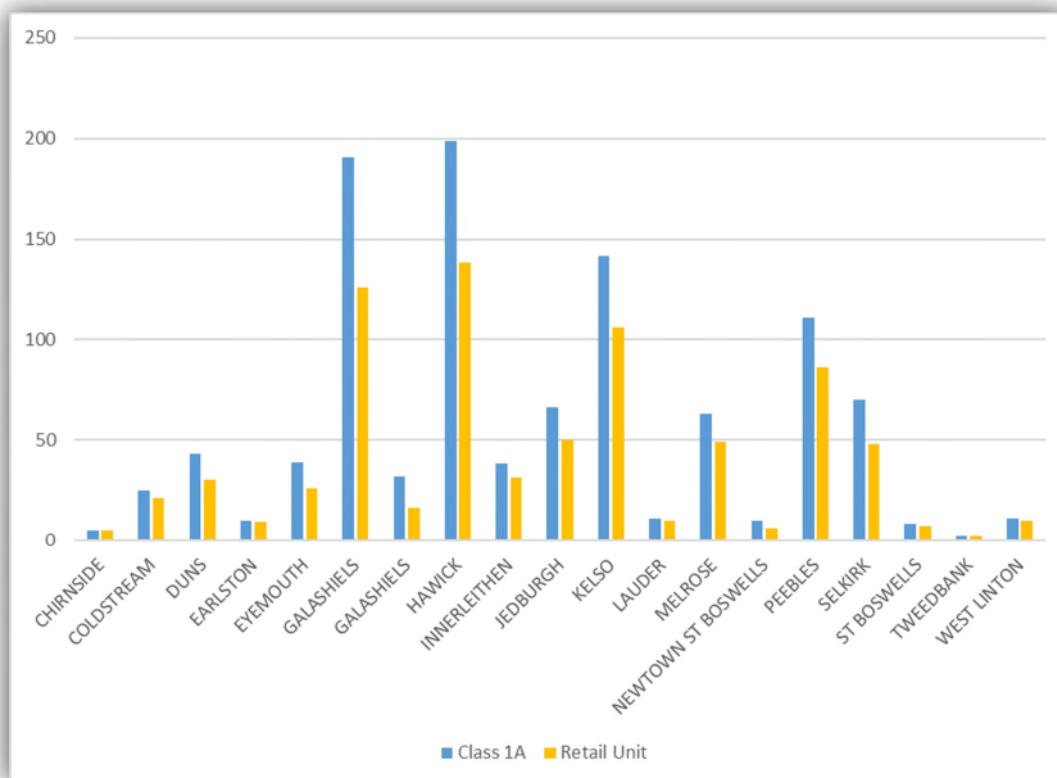


\* Percentages in Figure 3 may not add up due to rounding



7.5 Figure 3A shows that there are still a higher proportion of retail units (former use class 1) in all settlements within use class 1A. Therefore, different types of ‘shops’ are still prevalent, for example, clothes shops, gift shops and hairdressers.

Figure 3A: Use Class 1A and retail units within each settlement summer 2023



7.5 The variety of uses overall, within use class 1A, can be an indicator of vitality and viability in the town centre where there remains an appropriate mix of town centre uses. Figure, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E and 3F highlight the range of businesses generating public activity.

Figures 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F types of businesses in use class 1A units, summer 2023

Figure 3B: Beauty Services

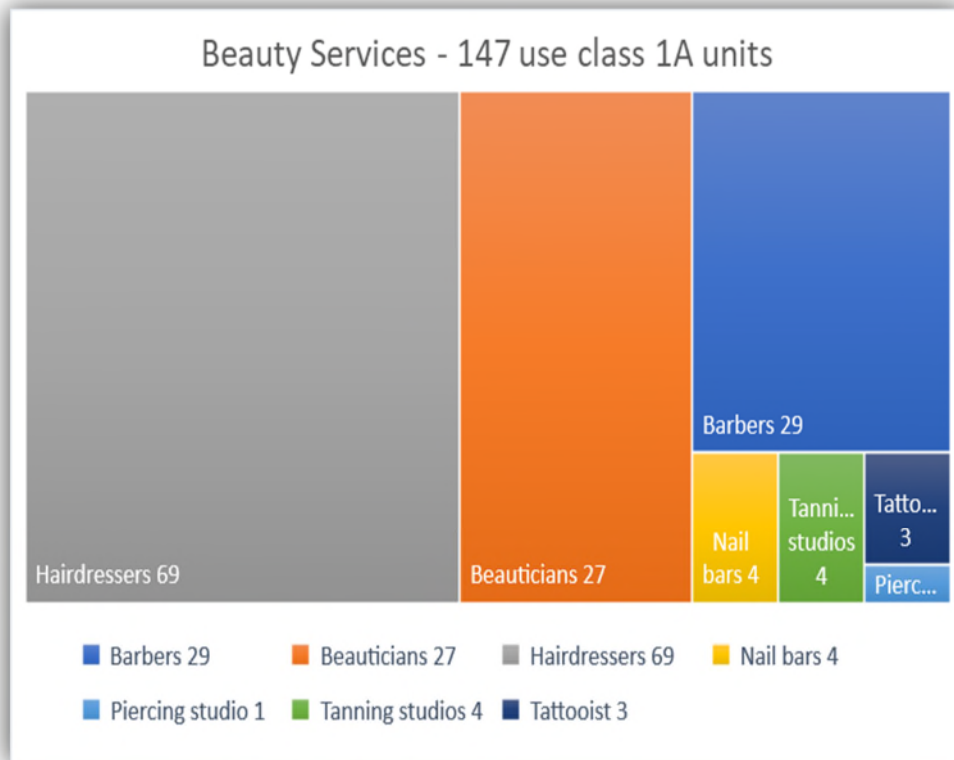


Figure 3C: Food Vendors

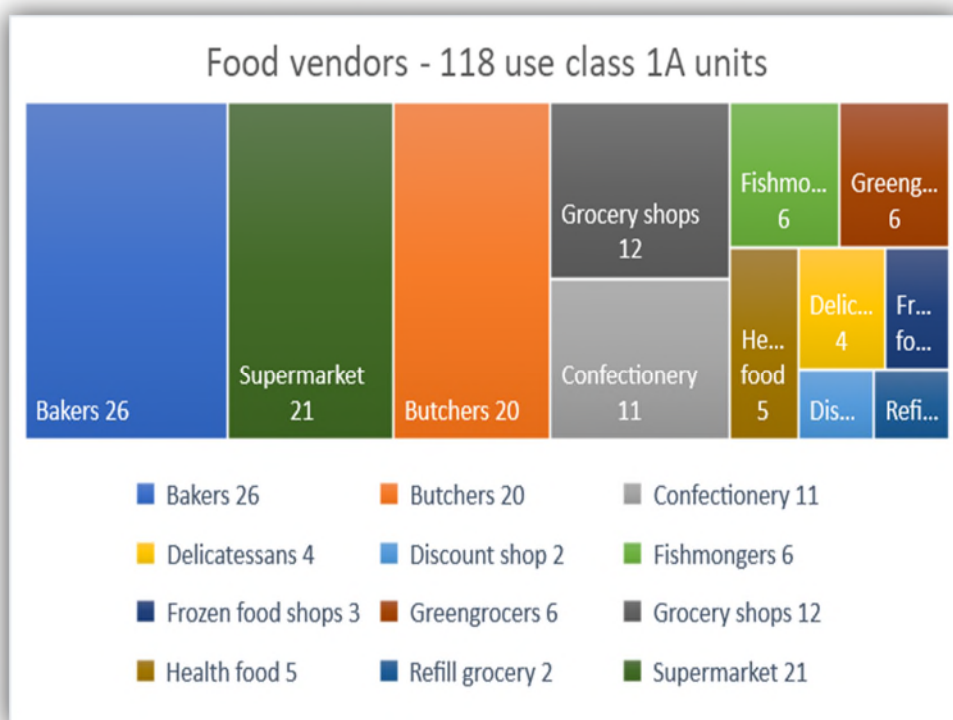


Figure 3D: Health Services

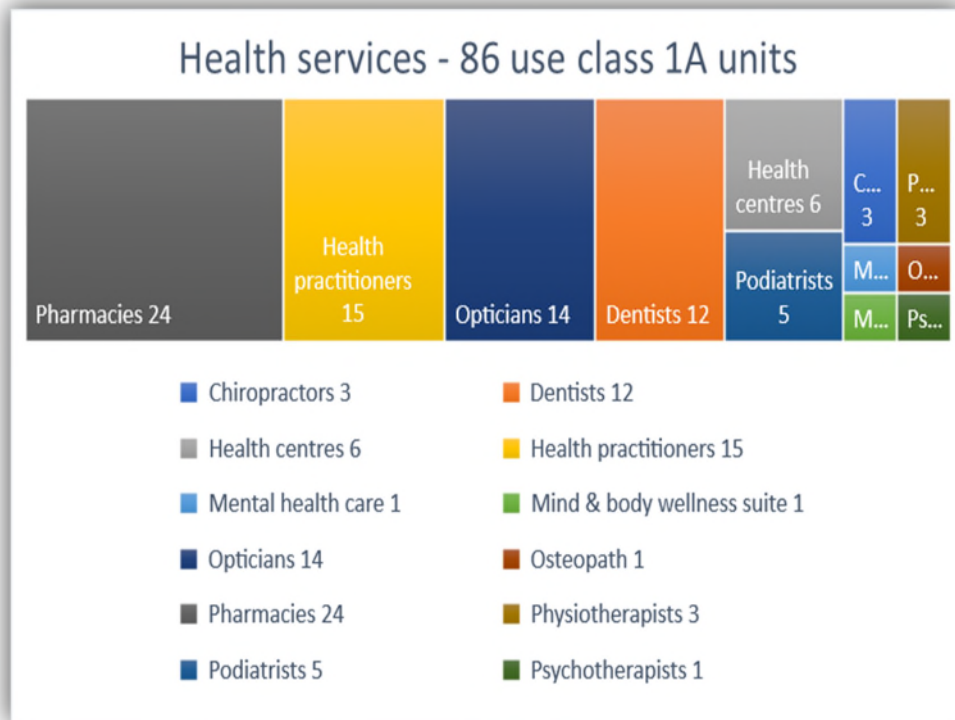
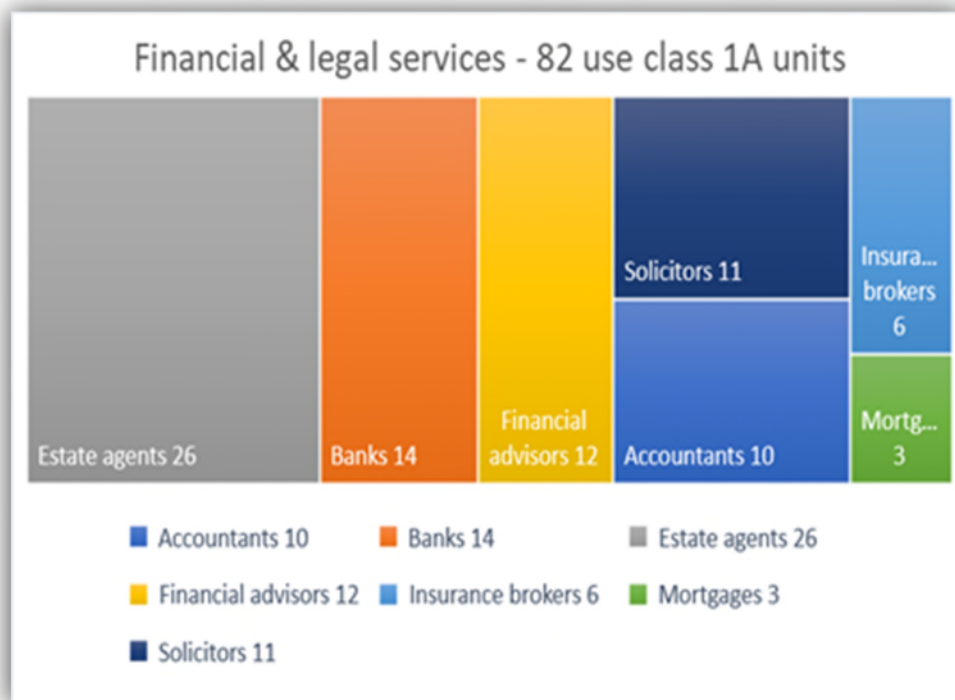
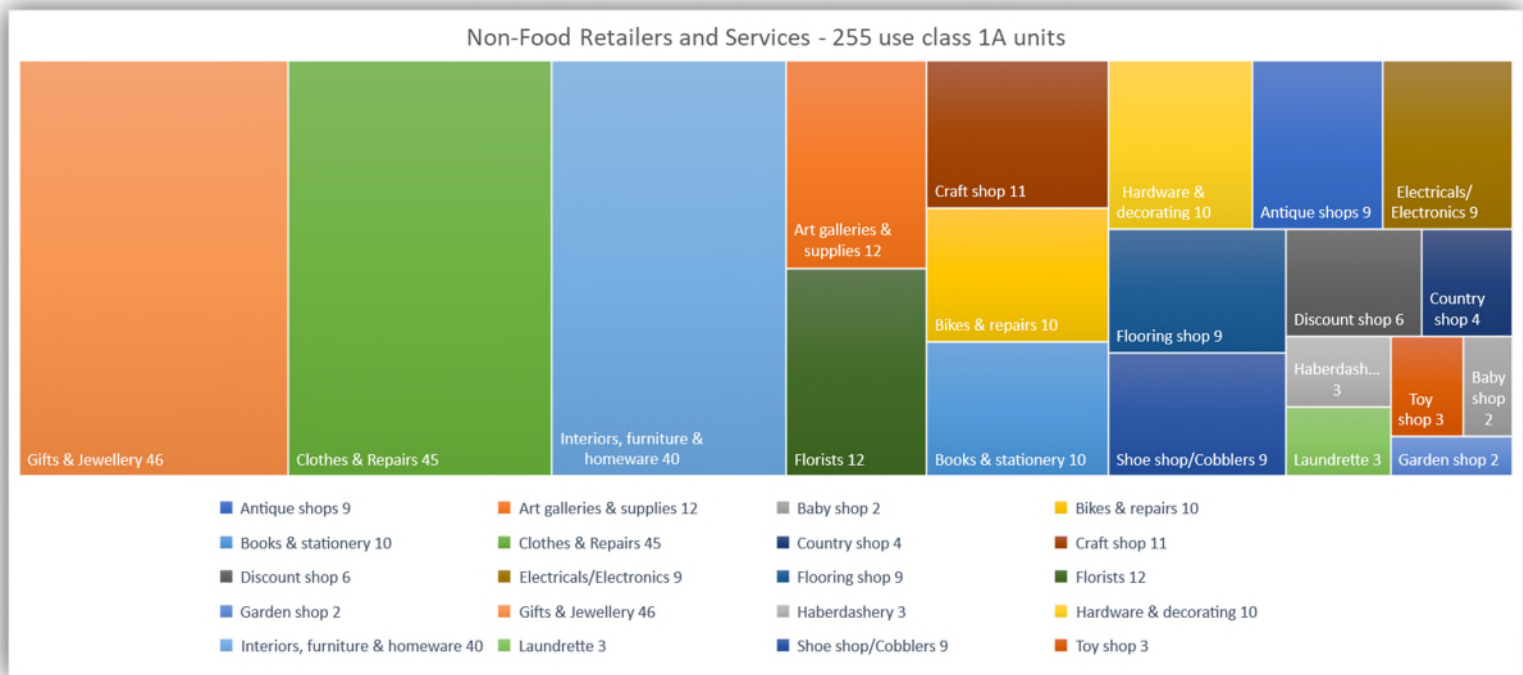


Figure 3E: Financial & Legal Services



7.6 Figures 3B-F outline the businesses occupying units within use class 1A across Borders towns. There are a number of miscellaneous businesses that do not fall within the commercial groupings above, for example, dog groomers, e-cigarette shops, funeral directors.

Figure 3F: Non-Food Retailers and Services



## Floorspace

- 8.1 Floorspace data from the Scottish Assessors is used in the retail survey. **This data is only available for class 1A (excluding sui generis use) units.** Further information on the floorspace data collation process can be found in Appendix 2.
- 8.2 Table 5 shows the number of use class 1A (excluding sui generis) units per settlement; the volume of floorspace of these units; the volume of vacant floorspace; and the percentage of floorspace sitting vacant (the total floorspace vacancy rate). Galashiels and Hawick have the highest total town centre floorspace comprising 62% of floorspace within the surveyed town centres.

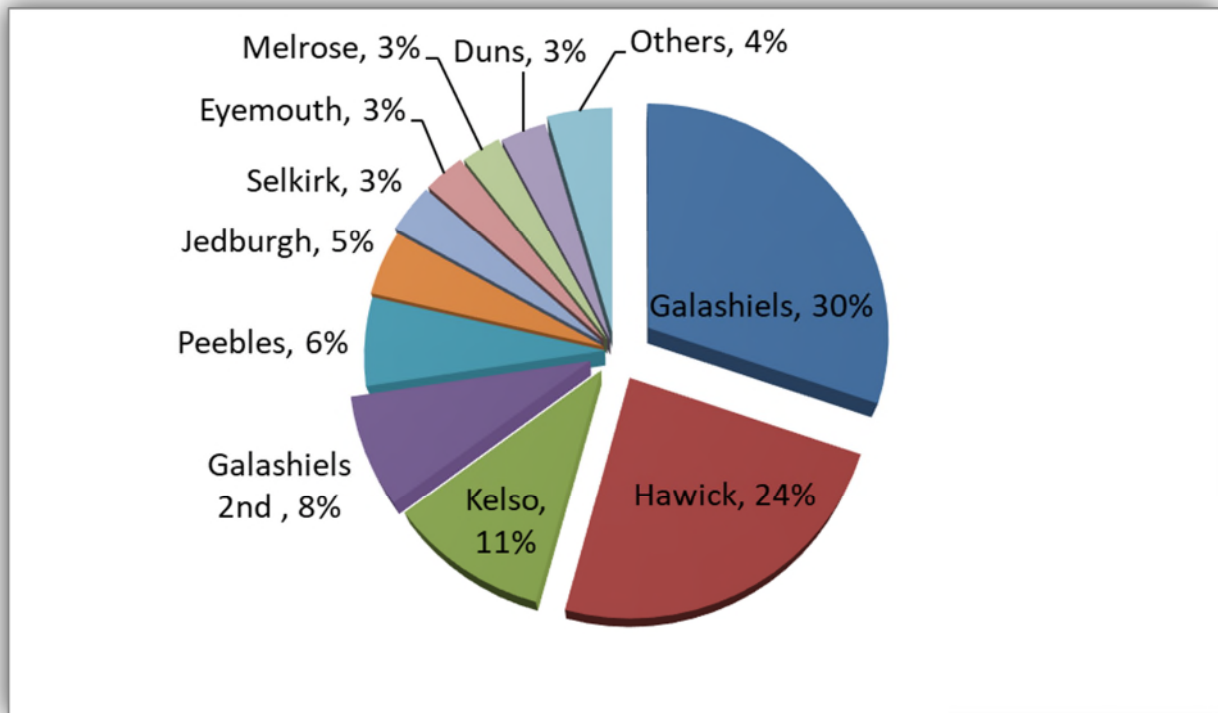
Table 5: Floorspace data for use class 1A, (rounded to nearest 100)

	Class 1A units	Total floorspace	Total vacant floorspace	Total floorspace vacancy rate
Chirnside	5	663	383	58%
Coldstream	21	2069	179	9%
Duns	30	6265	1222	20%
Earlston	9	668	68	10%
Eyemouth	26	5705	412	7%
Galashiels	126	59533	7704	13%
Galashiels 2nd	16	15369	1253	8%
Hawick	138	47202	4743	10%
Innerleithen	31	2098	347	17%
Jedburgh	50	8918	1005	11%
Kelso	106	20742	437	2%
Lauder *	10	879	0	0%
Melrose	49	5420	386	7%
Newtown St Boswells	6	868	140	16%
Peebles	86	12106	237	2%
Selkirk	48	6764	1415	21%
St Boswells	7	737	0	0%
Tweedbank *	2	171	0	0%
West Linton	10	686	38	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>196864</b>	<b>19968</b>	<b>10%</b>

\* Towns with vacant units in use class 3 but not use class 1A

- 8.3 The findings show Galashiels, Galashiels 2nd centre, Hawick, Kelso, Peebles, Jedburgh, Duns, Eyemouth, Selkirk and Melrose have the highest volumes of floorspace in the Borders and continue to contribute 96% of the total floorspace of the 18 surveyed settlements, as figure 4 illustrates.

Figure 4: Location of Town Centre floorspace, summer 2023



8.4 Table 6 analyses data by four floorspace volume categories. Most units are small (<100sq m) or medium sized (100-250sq m). Only 3 large (>1000sq m) units are vacant; two of the large vacant units are on Channel Street in Galashiels, and the third of these vacant units is in Galashiels 2<sup>nd</sup> centre. Large units have a floorspace vacancy rate of 5%, compared to 13% vacancy rate of medium-large sized units (250-1000sq m) and 14% of medium units (100-250sq m). There has been an increase in the number of units of (1000sq m>), following the extension of Hawick town centre boundary (2016) across the Teviot, which includes several very large units in this part of the town.

8.5 In the current audit, small units (<100sqm) are performing marginally better than medium (100-250 sq m) and medium-large (250-1000 sq m) units. The vacancy rate and floorspace vacancy rate for medium sized has risen 1% and the unit vacancy and floorspace vacancy rates for medium-large units has risen by 4% since the last audit. Large units (>1,000 sq m) unit vacancy and floorspace vacancy rates have risen 3% and 5%, respectively. The largest units still have the lowest vacancy rate, however, these comprise the smallest number of units.

Table 6: Performance by unit floorspace volume, summer 2023 \*

Floorspace volume	Units	Vacant units	Unit vacancy rate	Floorspace	Vacant floorspace	Floorspace vacancy rate	Breakdown of vacant floorspace
<100	690	93	13%	36,474	4489	12%	23%
100-250	255	37	15%	40,738	5612	14%	28%
<b>250-1000</b>	92	12	13%	43,611	5607	13%	28%
>1000	34	3	9%	75792	4010	5%	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1071</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>196615</b>	<b>19718</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Figures may not add due to rounding; percentage figures calculated before rounding.

## Charity Shops

- 9.1 As charity shops are normally entitled to 80% mandatory rate relief, charity shops may be viable in circumstances where other shops are not. However, the presence of charity shops may be one factor that can increase footfall on a high street; although, a combination of factors is likely to affect footfall in any given town.
- 9.2 Table 7 lists the towns with charity shops operating; the number of charity shops operating per town; and the percentage of shops operating as charity shops. The towns with the highest number of charity shops surveyed are; Hawick (7), Kelso (6), Galashiels (5) and Peebles (5). There are 33 charity shops within the surveyed town centres, making 5% of retail units, overall, operating as charity shops.

Table 7: Number of retail units and number operating as charity shops, summer 2023

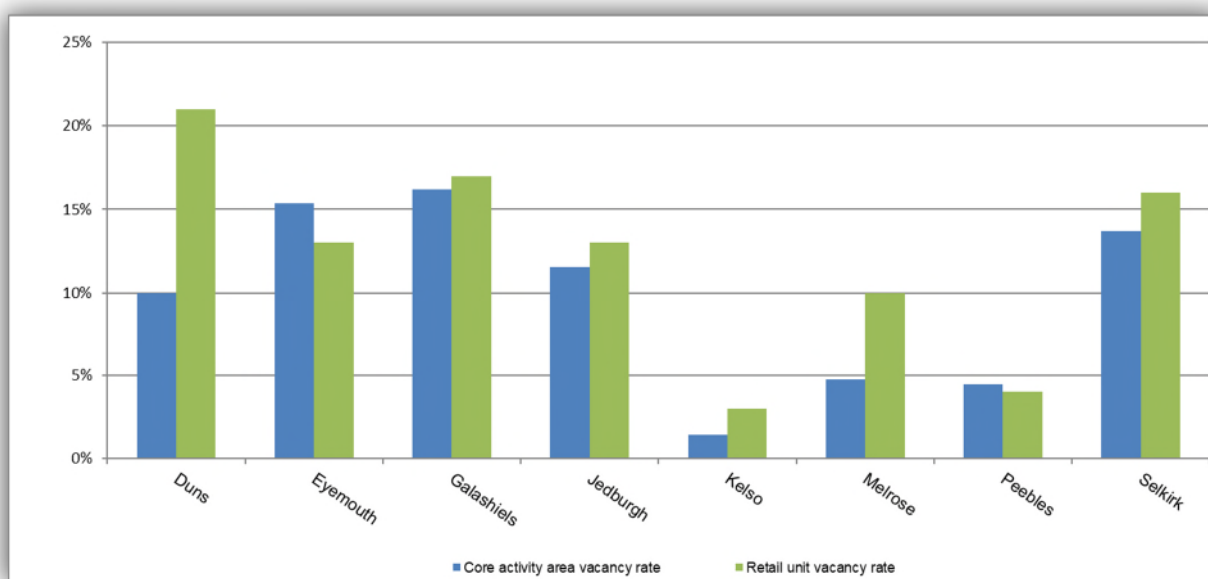
Settlement	Charity shops	Total retail units	% charity shops
COLDSTREAM	1	21	5%
DUNS	2	30	7%
EYEMOUTH	1	26	4%
GALASHIELS	5	126	4%
HAWICK	7	138	5%
INNERLEITHEN	1	31	3%
JEDBURGH	2	50	4%
KELSO	6	106	6%
MELROSE	1	49	2%
PEEBLES	5	86	6%
SELKIRK	2	48	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>5%</b>

Note – Total retail units of towns with a charity shop only.

## Supporting Town Centre Viability

- 10.1 In the central parts of our town centres, local planning policy is used to prevent the loss of town centre uses, which support most vibrancy and footfall. Local Development Plan Policy ED4—Core Activity Areas in Town Centres supports class 1 (shops) and class 3 (food and drink) uses within Core Activity Areas. Use class 1 and 2 were replaced by use class 1A at the beginning of 2023. Although, these uses are considered to support vitality and the policy restricts other uses, there is some flexibility of uses within the policy depending upon the performance of a town centre at that point in time.
- 10.2 Policy ED4—Core Activity Areas in Town Centres applies in the core parts of the nine town centres identified within the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan.
- 10.3 Figure 5 compares the overall town centre vacancy rates of the settlements covered by the Core Activity Area policy against the average vacancy rates within the Core Activity Areas.

Figure 5: Comparison of vacancy rates, summer 2023



- 10.5 The average unit vacancy rate within Core Activity Areas stands at 8%, a decrease of 3% from the last survey in winter 2022, although the Galashiels Core Activity Area has been reduced to Bank Street. The unit vacancy rate within Core Activity Areas is 4% lower than the overall Scottish Borders vacancy rate, but this does not reflect wide variations amongst the towns surveyed.
- 10.6 Figure 5 shows that the Core Activity Areas within Duns, Galashiels, Jedburgh, Kelso, Melrose and Selkirk have a lower vacancy rate than their respective town centres as a whole. The Core Activity Areas within Eyemouth and Peebles have higher vacancy rates than their whole town centres.



- 10.7 The core activity area within Hawick was removed for a one-year trial period as part of the Town Centre Core Activity Area Pilot Study. The primary purpose of the study was to examine ways to revitalise and reinvigorate the town centres of Hawick and Galashiels by adding more flexibility to Policy ED4 (Core Activity Areas in Town Centres) within the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016. The Pilot has been extended until such a time that the adopted Local Plan 2016 is superseded.
- 10.8 In Hawick, the vacancy rate has been repeatedly over the Scottish Borders average and the town has the highest number of long-term vacancies. Removing the Core Activity Area completely allows a greater number of uses within the town centre. The pilot study in Galashiels allows greater flexibility for potential uses within the Core Activity Area.

## Town Centre Health Checks

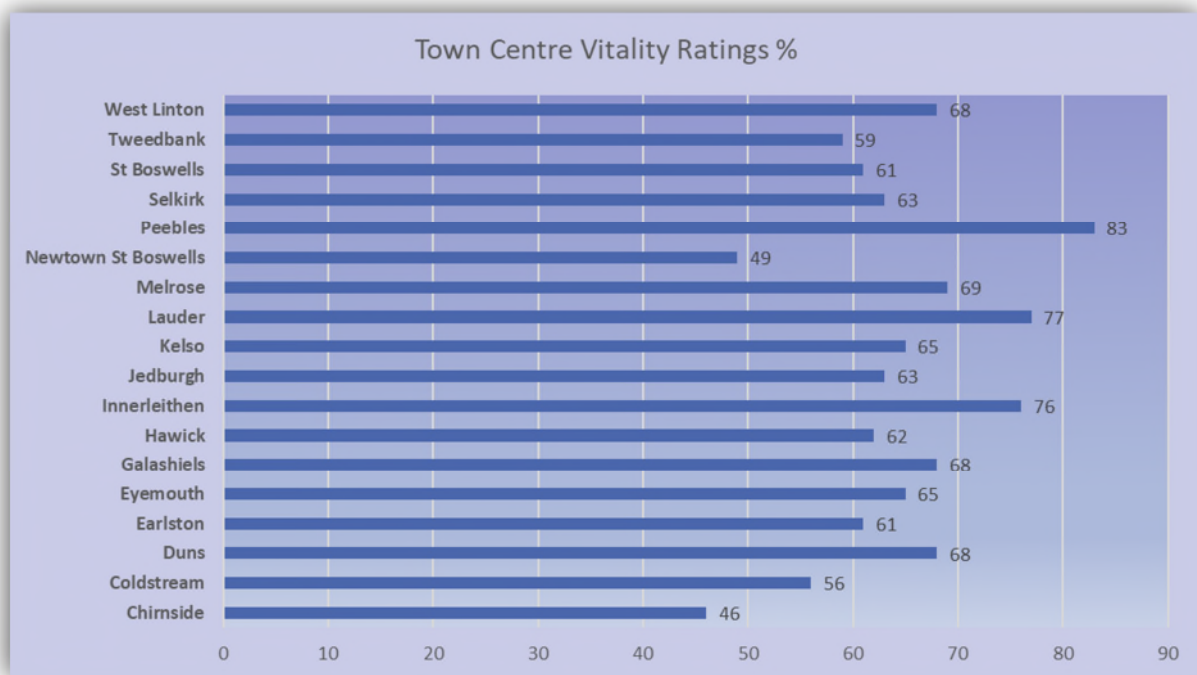
- 11.1 Town Centre Health Checks are conducted for each settlement to assess town centre vitality. The settlements are scored on a range of criteria relating to accessibility, safety, diversity of uses and the quality of the built environment. A copy of the checklist used can be found in Appendix 3.
- 11.2 The average vitality rating across all surveyed settlements is 65%, which is up 2% from winter 2022, to the same rating as summer 2022. The settlements ranking higher were Peebles (83%), Lauder (77%) and Innerleithen (76%). The towns, which ranked lower, were Coldstream (56%), Chirnside (46%) and Newtown St. Boswells (49%), (see Figure 8 below).
- 11.3 Settlements with smaller populations may have high scoring for the quality of the town centre environment, however, are unlikely to score as well for accessibility and diversity of uses. Settlements with larger populations have the advantage, in terms of both infrastructure, e.g. public transport, and diversity of uses, e.g. sports pitches and libraries (see Table 9 for population figures below). The largest towns in the Borders are Hawick and Galashiels, the smallest settlements, included in the town centre survey, are Chirnside, Newtown St. Boswells and St. Boswells.

Table 8: Population counts from the 2021 census

Settlement	Population	Settlement	Population
Chirnside	1457	Kelso	6681
Coldstream	1944	Lauder	1887
Duns	2887	Melrose	1904
Earlston	1715	Newtown St Boswells	1465
Eyemouth	3473	Peebles	8581
Galashiels	12302	Selkirk	5458
Hawick	13586	St Boswells	1418
Innerleithen	3225	Tweedbank	1994
Jedburgh	3832	West Linton	1851

Source: National Records of Scotland

Figure 6: Town Centre Vitality Ratings summer 2023



## Long-Term Vacancy

- 12.1 The length of time vacant units have been unoccupied can be an indicator of the specific challenges a town centre may be facing. Where a unit is long-term vacant there may be complex or technical causes of vacancy rather than direct market causes. For example, a unit's use could be prevented by a legal ownership dispute or legislative constraints that cannot be overcome. Furthermore, value of commercial property can be linked to the rent it has yielded. Long-term vacancy may also result from the gradual decline of a specific part of a town centre. Studying persistent vacancy can also help distinguish between short and long-term vacancy.
- 12.2 Figure 7 breaks down overall unit vacancy rates across nine town centres by length of vacancy, whilst Table 8 lists long term vacant unit numbers and long-term vacancy rates per settlement. This data is unaffected by the additional units because only 3 units in the additional units are vacant. Therefore, their inclusion has a negligible effect on figures.

Figure 7: Town centre vacancy rates by vacancy length summer 2023

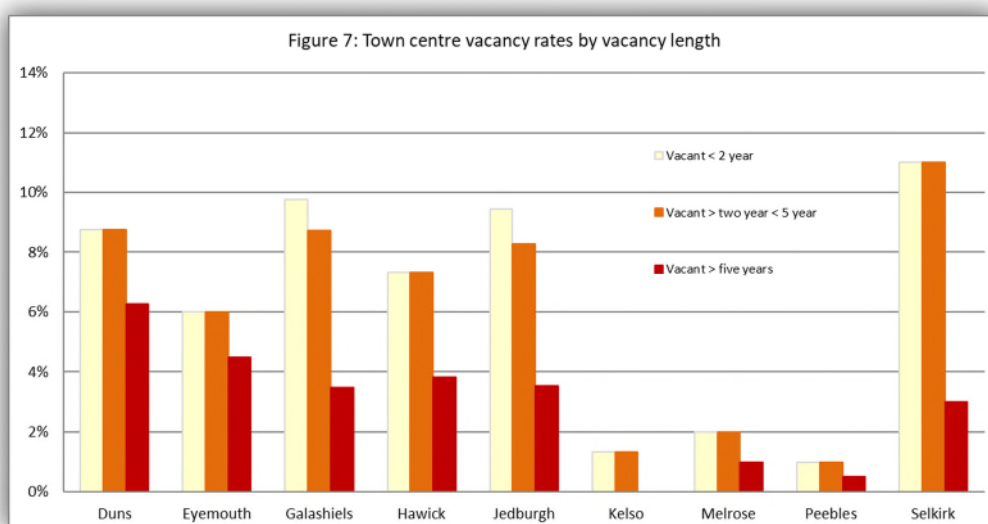


Table 9: Long term (5 yrs +) vacant units and long-term vacancy rates, summer 2023

Settlement	Long term vacant units	Total units	Long term vacancy rate
Duns	5	56	9%
Eyemouth	3	61	5%
Galashiels	10	237	4%
Hawick	11	261	4%
Jedburgh	3	89	3%
Kelso	0	175	0%
Melrose	1	79	1%
Peebles	1	141	1%
Selkirk	3	92	3%

## Conclusions

- 13.1 The overall Scottish Borders unit vacancy rate has remained the same as the last survey at 13%; considering all units surveyed the vacancy rate is 12%. Since summer 2014 the vacancy rate has varied between 11% and 12%. The rate stood at 12% in winter 2014 and consequently dropped to 11% for a period of 5 audits prior to rising back up to 12% in summer 2017. Despite a slight drop in summer 2021 to 11%, the vacancy rate is the highest it has been since the audit began in 2007. The vacancy rate remains well above the low of 7% recorded before the economic downturn. However, the current Borders unit vacancy rate is lower than the UK average retail vacancy rate of 13.9% (source: Local Data Company).
- 13.2 Hawick's unit vacancy rate has risen to 17% in the summer 2023 survey, an increase of 1% since the previous survey; with consideration to all units surveyed Hawick's vacancy rate is 15%. Hawick has generally experienced declining footfall in recent years and its unit vacancy rate has varied between 12% and 19% since 2009. In planning terms, the Council has responded by allowing a more flexible range of uses via the removal of the Core Activity Area from Hawick through the Town Centre Core Activity Area Pilot Study. Funding was secured from Historic Environment Scotland (HES) in April 2019 for heritage and conservation-based regeneration activities within Hawick town centre. Funding from HES (£1.315m), the South of Scotland Enterprise (£60k) and the Council (£200k) will run until 31 March 2025. The Council will continue to pay close attention to Hawick, especially the High Street.
- 13.3 Galashiels' unit vacancy rate stands at 17%, another decrease of 1% in two consecutive surveys. The vacancy rate in the town centre has fluctuated over previous years notably from a high of 19% in winter 2016 to 15% in winter 2017. The performance of the town centre will continue to be monitored closely, especially vacant units along Channel Street and the north end of the High Street.
- 13.4 Innerleithen's unit vacancy decreased to 13% and 12% (all units). Innerleithen has witnessed new businesses opening or expanding in the last couple of years. Selkirk's retail unit vacancy rate increased from 14% to 16% at the winter 2022 survey, the second rise in two consecutive audits. In this survey the vacancy rate has remained at 16% and is 15% when all units are counted. The Council responded to the challenges in Selkirk by initiating the Selkirk CARS regeneration scheme, which ran into 2018 and included public realm improvement works in the Market Square. Jedburgh had a vacancy rate of 14% in the summer 2021 and 2022 audits, however, this rose to 16% in winter 2022. This survey noted that Jedburgh also has decreased its vacancy rate by 3% to 13% (original units) and 11% for all units counted. The CARS regeneration scheme in Jedburgh ended in 2022. Eyemouth vacancy rate had been at 15% for the last two summers, the decrease in vacancy rate to 13% in winter 2022 has remained the same in this survey for original units and stands at 11% counting all units. It is noted that in terms of low vacancy levels Earlston, Kelso, Lauder, Melrose, Peebles and West Linton continue to perform well and, St. Boswells has nil vacancies.
- 13.5 As noted, planning policy is provided by the adopted Local Development Plan. Future town centre/retail surveys will continue to monitor the impact of the policies set out within the Development Plan.

## Appendix 1 – Methodology

The town centre survey covers ground floor town centre units within eighteen Borders settlements and has been carried out on a bi-annual basis since winter 2006. The process for the audit is summarised below:

<b>Data preparation:</b>	Access database set up
	Access database changes, as necessary
	Identification of survey coverage
	Production of town centre survey maps
<b>Survey:</b>	Town centre site visits and surveying with town centre maps
	Recording of data
	Recording of new unit and unit spatial changes
<b>Data update:</b>	Database data entry
	GIS spatial changes
	Run database queries
	Results analysis

### Database

The database records the following information for each unit: unique unit reference number; name of the business (if the unit is occupied); description of the business (*e.g.*, bakery, clothes shop, newsagents); full address; use classification; SBC use categorisation; whether the unit is a chain/multiple; unit floorspace data; and whether unit is within a Core Activity Area.

### New fields

New fields have been added to the database over time. These have enabled monitoring to extend to cover specific policy areas such as Core Activity Areas, charity shops, long-term vacancies and chain/multiple units. The coverage of the survey can be extended or reduced going forward in line with new trends, which happen to emerge in the future.

### Geographic coverage

In 2006 thirteen town centres were surveyed. In addition to these, a second centre for Galashiels was also introduced in 2006. This was included due to the town's substantial retail and commercial developments outside the town centre. In 2007 this surveying was extended to include all eighteen settlements in the Borders with a population greater than 1000. There have been no additional towns added following the publication of census 2021 results.

## **Central retail districts**

The survey covers a single designated central retail district for each town, except Galashiels where both the town centre and a second centre at Wilderhaugh are monitored. Where the town has a designated town centre boundary in the Local Development Plan, this is used as the central retail district boundary. Where no LDP town centre boundary exists, a central retail district (which has no planning status and is only used for retail survey monitoring purposes) covers the parts of the town where retail units are focussed.

In 2006 three settlements (Tweedbank, Earlston and Coldstream) did not have boundaries identified in the Finalised Local Plan. Central retail districts were created for these three settlements following site visits. This was repeated in the 2007 survey for the additional five settlements brought into the survey: Chirnside, Lauder, Newtown St Boswells, St Boswells and West Linton.

In 2016, following the adoption of the Council's Local Development Plan, Hawick's town centre boundary was subject to a significant change, which resulted in a notable extension to the town centre. This resulted in 11 new units being monitored through the retail survey. There was also a minor change in the Garfield Street area, which resulted in two units now sitting outside the town centre. Overall, there was a net increase of 9 units following these changes to the town centre. Minor changes were also made to Galashiels town centre boundary but these did not result in any changes to surveyed units.

## **Floorspace**

Use class 1 & 2 floorspace had been monitored since the summer 2013 survey; from summer 2023 the floorspace being monitored is for use class 1A units only. This data is primarily based on the Assessor's data for the gross floorspace of each unit. The data collected covers use class 1A (shops & professional services) but does not cover use class 3 (food and drink), use class 4 (business), use class 7 (hotels), use class 8 (residential institutions), use class 10 (non-residential institutions) and use class 11 (assembly & leisure). A small proportion of use class 1A units, for which we do not hold assessors data, have a floorspace measurement based on its polygon in the GIS shapefile. A sample of single storey units were examined to establish the relationship between Assessors gross floorspace and unit area as ascertained from the shapefile. A calculation was then made for each of the remaining units using this relationship and other information known about the units (e.g. likely no. floors occupied) to arrive at an estimate for each. Note that this methodology differs to that used for the 2011 Retail Capacity Study.

## Appendix 2 – Use Categorisation

Table 1.2: Use class orders included in the survey

<p><b>Class 1A.</b> <b>Shops and financial, professional and other services</b></p>	<p>(1) Use —            (a) for the retail sale of goods other than hot food,            (b) as a post office,            (c) for the sale of tickets,            (d) as a travel agency,            (e) for the sale of cold food for consumption off the premises,            (f) for hairdressing,            (g) for the direction of funerals,            (h) for the display of goods for sale,            (i) for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles,            (j) as a laundrette or dry cleaners,            (k) for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, where the sale, display or service is principally to visiting members of the public.            (2) Use for the provision of—            (a) financial services,            (b) professional services,            (c) any other services,            which it is appropriate to provide in a shopping area and where the sale, display or service is principally to visiting members of the public.            Other examples: supermarket; chemist; auction room; showroom, box office, offices of lawyers, accountants and other professionals (only where there are visiting members of the public); estate agent; health centre; doctors', dentists' or vets' surgery, bank, building society, foreign currency exchange; beautician; nail salon; massage or other therapies;</p>
<p><b>Class 3.</b> <b>Food and drink</b></p>	<p>Use - for the sale of food or drink for consumption on the premises.            Examples: Cafés; snack bars; restaurants.</p>
<p><b>Class 4.</b> <b>Business</b></p>	<p>Use —            (a) as an office, other than a use within paragraph 2 of class 1A (financial, professional and other services);            (b) for research and development of products or processes; or            (c) for any industrial process;            being a use which can be carried on in any residential area without detriment to the amenity of that area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.            Examples: Corporate office, research laboratory, government office with no visiting members of the public; manufacturing of goods (not within class 5)</p>
<p><b>Class 7.</b> <b>Hotels and Hostels</b></p>	<p>Use as a hotel, boarding house, guest house, or hostel where no significant element of care is provided, other than premises where alcohol (within the meaning given by section 2 of the Licensing Scotland Act 2005) is sold, pursuant to a premises licence issued under that Act to persons other than residents or to persons other than persons consuming.</p>
<p><b>Class 8.</b> <b>Residential Institutions</b></p>	<p>Use —            (a) for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care other than a use within class 9 (houses);</p>

	(b) as a hospital or nursing home; or (c) as a residential school, college or training centre. Other examples: hospices, boarding schools, care home.
<b>Class 10. Non-residential institutions</b>	Use, not including residential use — (a) as a crèche, day nursery or day centre; (b) for the provision of education; (c) for the display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire); (d) as a museum; (e) as a public library or public reading room; (f) as a public hall or exhibition hall; or (g) for, or in connection with, public worship or religious instruction, or the social or recreational activities of a (h) as a law court.
<b>Class 11. Assembly and leisure</b>	Use as — (a) a cinema; (b) a concert hall; (c) a bingo hall or casino; (d) a dance hall or discotheque; or (e) a swimming bath, skating rink, gymnasium or area for other indoor or outdoor sports or recreation, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms. Examples: amusement arcade; amusement park; bowling alley; break-out rooms; casino; childrens' soft play; pool or snooker hall.

#### Summary of Sui Generis Uses

Use as an amusement arcade or centre or funfair.

Use as a theatre.

Use for the sale of fuel for motor vehicles

Use for the sale, or display for the sale of motor vehicles.

Use for a taxi business or for the hire of motor vehicles.

Use as a scrap yard or yard for the breaking of motor vehicles.

Use for the storage or distribution of minerals.

Use as a public house.

Use for any work registerable under the Alkali etc. Works Regulations Act 1906.

Use for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

Use as a waste disposal installation for incineration, chemical treatment (as defined in Annex IIA to Directive 75/442/EEC under heading D9), or landfill of waste to which Directive 91/689/EEC applies.

Use as a residential flat.

Use as a betting office

Use as a pay day loan shop.



<b>SBC Categories</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>0</b>	Financial, professional and other services
<b>1</b>	Food
<b>2</b>	Drink, confectionary and tobacco
<b>3</b>	Clothing and footwear
<b>4</b>	Furniture, floor coverings and textiles
<b>5</b>	Domestic appliances and electrical
<b>6</b>	Hardware and DIY
<b>7</b>	Other non-food
<b>8</b>	Mixed Business
<b>9</b>	Hire and repair
<b>10</b>	Vacant
<b>11</b>	Charity Shop
<b>12</b>	Residential institutions
<b>13</b>	Non-residential institutions
<b>14</b>	Assembly & Leisure
<b>Category X</b>	No longer used for retail

## Appendix 3 – Town Centre Health Checklist

Rating 1-5 (1=poor; 5=excellent)

Town Centre: Officer Initials: _____ Date: _____		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Quality of town centre environment</b>						
Overall cleanliness of town centre						
Property appearance, condition and maintenance						
Quality/ built heritage of buildings						
Evidence of recent investment by retailers						
Availability and quality of visitor infrastructure - e.g. street furniture, public toilets, payphones, signage						
Accessibility to Tourist Information Centre						
Presence and quality of open space						
Landscaping within the town centre						
<b>Accessibility</b>						
Provision of facilities for cyclists e.g. cycle lanes, cycle storage						
Ease of pedestrian movement e.g. signage, pedestrian crossings, pedestrianised zones						
Ease of movement for the less mobile e.g. lowered kerbs, pavement condition, automatic entrances						
Public Transport - e.g. presence and quality of bus timetables and bus shelters						
Location and quality of car parks, availability of disabled parking bays						
Impact of traffic on the town centre - e.g. traffic calming measures in place						
<b>Safety and security</b>						
Feeling of security - e.g. Presence of CCTV						
Presence of graffiti & vandalism (1= lots/5=none)						
<b>Diversity of uses</b>						
Presence of entertainment/leisure facilities e.g. swimming pool, cinema, bingo						
Presence of cultural and community facilities e.g. libraries, information boards, community halls						
Availability of food & drink facilities						
<b>Additional Notes:</b>						