

Name of meeting: CABINET
Date: 19th September 2017
Title of report: Huddersfield Town Centre Access and Connectivity project
 Impact Assessment Report

Purpose of report

To present to Cabinet the evidence and indicators that have been considered to provide an evaluation of the impact of the 'Huddersfield Town Centre Access and Connectivity' project against its original aims together with an overview of changes noted within the town centre since the scheme's implementation.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes As the scheme has been publicly considered as having a significant effect on two or more electoral wards.
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Naz Parkar - 11.09.17
Is it also signed off by the Service Director Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Debbie Hogg - 06.09.17
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft - 07.09.17
Cabinet member -- Economy portfolio	Cllr Peter McBride Economy - Strategic Planning Regeneration and Transport Cllr Naheed Mather Economy - Strategic Housing, Regeneration and Enforcement

Electoral wards affected: Newsome, Dalton and Greenhead

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

1. **Summary**

During 2015/2016 Kirklees Council delivered an Access and Connectivity project in Huddersfield town centre. Among the range of measures implemented, the scheme introduced Bus Gate enforcement cameras on five main streets which went live in February 2016 although fines were not issued until March. Following their introduction, representation was made via an open letter to the Council that 61 businesses had suffered a significant (up to 30%) decline in trade and were close to shutting and that therefore the cameras should be removed.

This representation was discussed at a Council meeting on the 9 November 2016 where it was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Transport; Skills; Jobs and Regional Affairs that an assessment into the impacts of the Bus Gates would be carried out after a full year of operation of the scheme.

This Impact Assessment report was completed in July 2017. The findings of the assessment are that considering all the indicators together it appears that the operation and trading picture of the town centre, or any specific parts of the town centre, is a complex one and there does not seem to be conclusive evidence that the installation of the bus gates has been the catalyst to a trading decline in the town centre.

2. **Information required to take a decision**

Key findings from the Impact Assessment are set out below, whilst the detailed report is included at Appendix 1.

2.1. **Businesses closed / opened**

Of the 61 businesses that were reported to have suffered a decline in trade and were close to shutting; following a survey of the businesses in May 2017, four businesses were found to have closed with two running closing down sales.

In contrast to this, virtualhuddersfield.com, a local website, reported 14 new openings in 2017. In addition, Council officers have noted three further openings not reported on this website.

2.2. **Car park income**

Car park income has been used as a proxy for visitors to the town centre.

The overall car parking income for Council operated car parking spaces has marginally increased by 1.18% within the ring road.

Whilst there has been a fall in on-street parking, there has been an increase within off-street car parks.

This may suggest that drivers are navigating the town centre in a different way, rather than being deterred from visiting the town centre.

2.3. **Bus Journey times**

Bus operators consider that the Bus Gates have been successful in terms of benefits to public transport.

Bus journey times, along two of the key corridors, have seen a reduction as follows:

- Westgate/Trinity Street – upto 35 seconds
- High Street - upto 1 min 50 seconds

2.4. **Traffic Flow at Bus Gates**

The Council's reasons for installing Bus Gate enforcement cameras were to:

- Provide journey time savings for public transport users
- Remove circulating and rat running traffic from the town centre
- Enforcement of existing traffic regulations in place since 1983
- Improve air quality within the town centre

Traffic volumes at the Bus Gates, during operational hours, have dramatically decreased meaning that the objective of removing circulating / rat running traffic and non-permitted traffic from the bus gate areas has been achieved.

A Saturday and Tuesday comparison is shown below:

	Average vehicles per day at Bus Gates during operational hours		
	Before	After	Reduction
Saturday	7,460	1,986	5,474
Tuesday	10,341	1,281	9,060

2.5. **Retail/Commercial Occupancy rates and ground-floor floorspace**

The total number of units has reduced year on year from 2014 to 2016 but there has been a more marked decline between 2014 and 2015 (641 to 628) than in the following years 2016 to 2017 (628 to 618).

The number of units empty or under refurbishment has increased from 118 to 124 (5.09%) between 2016 and 2017.

Overall ground-floor floor-space has decreased steadily year on year since 2014 at an average rate of 1.3% per annum but there has been an increase of 2.27% between 2016 and 2017.

2.6. Footfall

Footfall for the town centre as a whole has gone down but Westgate and High Street is variable.

Comparison figures for 2017 compared to 2015 are:

Town centre as a whole:

- Down 0.8% on market days,
- Down 1.4% on Non market days;
- Down 9.5% on Saturdays

Westgate

- Down 33% on market days
- Up 15% on non-market days
- Down 33% on Saturdays

High Street

- Up 9% on market days
- Up 14% on non-market days
- Down 4% on Saturdays

These trends are typical when comparing similar retail areas in the north of England, which have seen an average year-on-year (to February 2017) decline of 8.9 per cent, while the UK as a whole suffered an average 6.5 per cent decline over the same period.

These findings suggest that national and regional downward trends of town centre footfall appear to be reflected at a local level within Huddersfield town centre.

2.7. Air Quality

Air quality monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide (**NO₂**) has been measured within the town centre since 2004 in accordance with National Government legislation and guidance.

The EU legal threshold (critical) level of **NO₂** is 40µg/m³. The table below shows the levels of recorded **NO₂** levels within the town centre since 2012 to 2016.

Year	Annual NO₂ (µg/m ³)
2016	31.22
2015	44.81
2014	39.99
2013	46.33
2012	48.61

The year on year monitoring suggests that there has been a significant reduction of NO₂ in 2016 (after introduction of the bus gates) when compared to previous years although consideration should be given to changes in atmospheric conditions and other factors that may influence readings. Further monitoring would therefore need to be done to understand whether the reduced values form part of a longer term trend.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention (EIP)

None

3.2 Economic Resilience (ER)

The town centre assessment / evaluation report (attached) provides evidence of a range of indicators that reflect the economic and environmental situation in Huddersfield town centre both before and after the implementation of the recent Access and Connectivity project.

3.3 Improving Outcomes for Children

None

3.4 Reducing demand of services

None

3.5 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

None

4. Consultees and their opinions

No ward councillors have been consulted on this report.

5. Next steps

For Cabinet to consider the report.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

None

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

The portfolio holders for Economy - Cllr Peter McBride and Cllr Naheed Mather were briefed on the 29 August 2017 on the contents of this report. Both Portfolio holders agreed that the operation and trading picture of the town centre is a complex one and that the report's findings and evidence does not seem to offer conclusive evidence that the installation of the bus gates has been the catalyst to a trading decline in the town centre.

8. **Contact officer**

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9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Huddersfield Town Centre Access and Connectivity project - 6th June 2014

Objection to the Proposal to alter Parking and Waiting restrictions and introduce Bus Gates in Huddersfield Town Centre - 15th April 2015

10. **Service Director responsible**

Paul Kemp - Economy, Regeneration and Culture
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Appendix 1 -- Open Letter to Kirklees Council

Open letter to the Chief Executive of Kirklees Council- Adrian Lythgo

c.c.

Barry Shearman- MP

Cllr Peter McBride- Transportation /Highways

Assistant Director for Highways Kirklees- Joanne Bartholomew

Highways Manager Kirklees- Richard Mainprize

Highways Manager Kirklees- Richard Hatfield

Town Centre Manager- Jayne Pearson

The Editor - Huddersfield Examiner

All Kirklees Councillors

Dear Adrian Lythgo,

We the representatives of HTCAG are utterly appalled by the way we were treated with complete arrogance and disdain by our elected representative Cllr Peter McBride in the meeting held on the 12th July in Civic Centre 3 (see Appendix 3 for the agenda). He was defensive and set a negative tone for the meeting from the start. His attitude was both un-cooperative and patronizing, forcing us to leave the meeting before it was concluded. This appeared to cause a degree of frustration to his colleague's who were present, who were doing their best to be more reasonable and seemed more willing to listen to our concerns and offer some more positive and workable solutions.

We are professional business people representing 61 town centre businesses and 2170 signatures on our petition calling for the bus-gates scheme to be abolished and we have a right to be listened and our genuine opinions to be seriously addressed. Yet Peter McBride's statement was that this scheme is not to be reviewed at all and he appeared unwilling to even take into account our concerns. He is responsible for town centre re-generation, yet is unwilling to even listen to the genuine concerns of members of the local business community. As a result, no conclusions were made at this meeting and therefore we must resume our original stance and respond to you directly with our future correspondence.

Many thanks for your letter dated 6th June 2016. In reply to your main points the Huddersfield Town Centre action Group would like to formerly reply as follows.

As you may or may not be aware the Huddersfield Town centre Action Group (HTCAG) now has 61 business members. These are town centre businesses that have all been adversely affected by Kirklees Councils now controversial bus gates scheme. All of these businesses have reported a steep decline in turnover of between 5% and 40 % from February 2016 compared to the months of February March and April 2015. Our customers are reporting that the bus-gates are the main cause of people not wanting to come into the town centre, because of the cameras, fines, congestion and the accessibility issues they have caused.

Whist we recognise that certain roadworks have had an adverse effect on trade, we are reporting that the steep decline in trade has been noticed specifically since February, which is when just the bus-gates came into operation. From September to November 2015 there were indeed roadworks in the town centre and on Westgate and Kirkgate, however no steep declines in our trade or footfall were reported for this period.

It is only since February these foot-fall declines have gained momentum and caused a substantial decline in our trading. Roadworks that have happened since have only exaggerated this decline, but there was and still is a steep drop off in February, which is when there were no roadworks in place. A further point is that businesses within our group who are not located in areas where roadworks have taken place, for example in the indoor market, have also suffered a decline in sales since February. We therefore disagree entirely with you point concerning the roadworks being sited as the main reason for trade/ footfall declines. We must insist that it is the bus- gates that are the reason for these declines as this is what our customers are reporting to us on a daily basis.

Also in answer to your comments reference why the bus-gates were installed. As far as the 61 traders in HTCAG are concerned, we did not see that the town centre had a traffic congestion issue. However and suddenly after the installation of the busgates in February, we then did have a huge congestion issue. This cannot be blamed on the roadworks again, because for the whole month of February there were NO roadworks on Westgate, yet the traffic issue especially at rush hour suddenly became horrendous, taking at least 20 minutes to get onto the ring-road from Westgate and also the ring-road itself became heavily congested too.

This congestion was only relieved when further roadworks started and buses and cars were then not allowed up Westgate at all! We are therefore reporting to you directly that no further proof if at all is needed as to the adverse effects of the busgates scheme from a congestion point of view.

We also feel that there is no point in waiting any longer to gain any further evidence that the bus-gates have had an adverse effect on the town centre and its business. We, HTCAG are 61 town centre businesses and we are reporting to you directly that we are trading between 5%-40% down since February. What further evidence does KMC council require as proof that the scheme is having a devastating effect. Please see below for the full list of our members and the declines in business being suffered since February, it makes very depressing and worrying reading.

Westgate Barbers	-10% DECLINE
Woods Menswear	-30% DECLINE
Circle Menswear	CUSTOMER/ BUSINESS INCONVENIENCE
Bronx Menswear	-40% DECLINE
La Fleur Florists	-20% DECLINE
Merrie England	-20% DECLINE
Town News	-33% DECLINE
Ex service Taxis	CUSTOMER/ BUSINESS INCONVENIENCE
IKonkar taxis	CUSTOMER/ BUSINESS INCONVENIENCE
Cartridge world	-20% DECLINE
Department 44	-40% DECLINE
Lynn's Café	-25% DECLINE

RSPCA Charity Shop	-25% DECLINE
A1 Stationary Stores	-33% DECLINE
Café Society	-25% DECLINE
The Keys Restaurant	-20% DECLINE
Benetton	NO FIGS/ FOOTFALL DECLINE
Hair Haus	-20% DECLINE
Huddersfield Electronics	-30% DECLINE
Horners Jewellers	GENERAL DECLINE SINCE FEB
Studio 18	-15% DECLINE
M&S Jewellery	-25% DECLINE
Kirkwood Hospice charity shop	-25% DECLINE
The Polish Corner	NEW VENTURE
Urban Escape	-25% DECLINE
Tag Hair Design	-30% DECLINE
Wood Street Bar	NO FIGURES BUT QUIET
Endemic Skate Shop	-30% DECLINE
Mitchells Butchers	-30% DECLINE
Mark Riley	-20% DECLINE
Westgate Cobblers	-30% DECLINE
Revival Fancy Dress	-25% DECLINE
Huddersfield HiFi	-25% DECLINE
The Blue Rooms	-20% DECLINE
Crafty Praxis	-20% DECLINE
Blue Rooms	-20% DECLINE
Calder Graphics	-10% DECLINE
Zephyr Bar	-5% DECLINE
AC Gallery	-22% DECLINE
Med One	-30% DECLINE
Coffee Evolution	-20% DECLINE
Bean Brothers	-20% DECLINE
Martin & Co	CUSTOMER/ BUSINESS INCONVENIENCE
Arcade Beer shop	NEW VENTURE
John William News	-25% DECLINE
Vox Bar	-25% DECLINE
Zuuton SwarmaTakeaway	-40% DECLINE
Mackinleys Carribean food store	-10% DECLINE
Kebabish	-20% DECLINE
Indigo Clothing	-25% DECLINE
Icestone ice cream parlour	NEW VENTURE/ INCONVENIENCE
The Little Kitchen	-30% DECLINE
Better future for the blind Charity	-25% DECLINE
Hadfields Bakery	INCONVENIENCE
Quality Butchers	-25% DECLINE
Card Circle	-20% DECLINE
Samuel Taylor	-20% DECLINE
Rico Menswear	-20% DECLINE
Bramleys estate Agents	CUSTOMER BUSINESS INCONVENIENCE
Mind Shop	-25% DECLINE

Its not just the small businesses, larger groups with multiple town centre shops have also suffered declines, and this is in ALL town centre locations, whether roadworks have been on-going or not.

All businesses from Charity shops to Coffee shops to popular restaurants such as Med One and The Keys and are now in decline, some with at least a third of their turnovers being affected. The Charity shops are reporting that they are getting fewer donations (down by 25%-50%) and therefore have less items to

sell as people are not coming into town to drop off their unwanted items. It's a very worrying trend for the town when even the Charity shops are reporting heavy declines in trade.

The town centre is quieter, you only have to look at the ghost town that has been created, especially on Saturdays. Customers are reporting that they don't even want to venture into the town centre due to the cameras and the fear of getting a fine. There are empty car parking spaces in the town centre on a Saturday afternoon now, when there never used to be. This is because people are not coming to the town centre at all. They are going else-where such as at Halifax, Leeds and White Rose, where there is free parking or no bus-gates. You only have to look at the comments on twitter to the Huddersfield Examiner after the articles that have recently been published referring to our action group and our objections to the bus-gate scheme. (Reference Appendix 1 for a selection of these comments).

Comments about people not coming into the town centre are not just restricted to the twitter pager of the Examiner. There are various letters to the newspaper over the last few weeks stating this over and over again. I have included copies of some of these too. (See Appendix 2). Also there are hundreds of comments on our petition sheets stating that it is too hard to come into the town centre/ scared of being fined/ town cannot be accessed easily etc etc. You can see copies of these sheets when we hand this petition in to the Council after all signatures have been collected. Currently 2170 signatures against the scheme have been collected and this figure is growing daily.

Since our last letter it appears that approximately £1.27 million will be generated by this bus-gates scheme, yet the council is still insisting that it is not a money making scheme. Yet we as traders have proof from our drop in turnover that this money is being indirectly taken out of our pockets. It is our declines in turnover that is, in effect, paying for this scheme, from fewer people coming into the town centre spending money in our shops and businesses.

The bus-gates scheme is simply over-kill for a town of this size. We now have nearly as many bus-gates in this town than they have in Leeds, which is a large pedestrianised metropolis. Yet we have far more loading restrictions here in Huddersfield. In Leeds for example on Briggate, they can off-load goods into shop until 10.30am instead of 8am here in Huddersfield. We feel that the bus gates are unnecessary for a town of this size and that less harsh methods of policing the traffic flow should have been considered and trialed, before such a scheme with such a devastating effect on local businesses was introduced.

Furthermore, all of our members believe that Huddersfield did not have a traffic safety/congestion issue in the first place.

We are interested to know what evidence the council had of the congestion/ traffic safety issues in the past that warranted the introduction of this scheme.

Where is the proof of these issues that Huddersfield was suffering from?

We also feel that the bus-gates are just a vehicle by which the council can generate more cash. The scheme has proved disastrous for town centre businesses, and very soon there will be more and more empty shops, which will mean lost revenue for the Council long-term.

The decline in business figures above speak for themselves and we request review and a u-turn now, before it is too late for us and our businesses. 61 shopkeepers/ businesses would not join together to highlight this to the Council if we were not genuinely concerned about our future livelihoods and the town centre in general. We are prepared to fight this until this scheme is reviewed and withdrawn. We want the cameras switched off now and so do 2170 town centre users.

We want our town centre and its footfall and trading level back to how they were. We have just exited a recession and the economy is delicate, especially in the light of Brexit. We need the support of our Council at this economically tough time. We want advertised free parking or at least a trial of free parking with more flexible/ increased time restrictions and lower parking charges granted for the town centre, in order to kick start the town and get people coming to Huddersfield again.

You quote in your letter that you want the scheme to "Improve accessibility for shoppers/ visitors/businesses", this has clearly not been achieved, as both HTCAG and our customers clearly feel that this has not been done and has in fact reduced the accessibility.

You mention in your letter that you will be assessing the impact of the busgates. the timescale are you proposing for this of several months is unnecessary, most businesses will be seriously struggling in the several month assessment period that you are proposing and some may have ceased trading altogether. We HTCAG traders think that this is an urgent matter, that needs a review NOW before we lose even money and therefore lose the excellent diversity of the small independentants that are present in the Kirkgate, Westgate and Byram Arcade areas of the town centre. Can you give us an indication of how you will be assessing the effects of the scheme and what parameters are you going to be using to asses its success/ failure.

We business rates payers and constituents do not feel that we are being represented, supported or protected at all by KMC council by the very nature of the bus-gates scheme and its introduction. The high street is an ever more challenging environment and as you state, needs to change with the times. However a council with any vision would see that survival can only happen with support and not penalties. For example making areas more pedestrian friendly is pointless unless there are pedestrians. People are attracted to shop, spend time and socialise by a vibrant, clean, safe and modern environment with good accessibility for all and ample choice. Rundown dirty streets of empty shops and neglected buildings are not a magnet for trade. Neither is the principle of fining customers for coming into the town centre. Add to this the difficulty of access, high parking charges and the risk of a bus-gate penalty, then there is little wonder traders and companies in other locations are thriving and enticing trade away. The town desperately needs investment in car parking provision. access, rent and rate reductions and incentives for independent traders, street services (cleaning, maintenance, landscaping), promotion, security, less red tape and some sensible town planning. It definitely doesn't need bus-gates and a policy of fines in a town of this size. We are not Leeds/Manchester or London.

We also have major concerns that this scheme with such a huge potential impact on the town was undertaken without the correct levels of consultation, with only 80 opinions being canvassed from the initial proposal of three potential town centre schemes. There was not a consultation done at all for the proposed actual bus-gates scheme that is now in place. There was also no Equality Impact Assessment done to our knowledge, which would have assessed the potential impact on local businesses/ disabled access and issues such as accessibility for the elderly etc.

Despite all this Cllr McBride has stated he is not willing to do a proper and correct review of this scheme after it has been in place for 5 months even though there are 61 businesses and 2170 town centre users who are our customers stating that it is having a negative effect on the town centre. Surely the Council should be listening to us? We are telling you its not working, not for our businesses or our customers and we are telling you we are very worried about our livelihoods. We are telling you that we think the town centre is dying BECAUSE of this scheme. It IS having a profound effect. Surely the Council should be listening to its town centre users and members of its business community?

Surely its better for the council to back-track on an ill thought out scheme that is having a detrimental effect on town centre businesses and its users, than be seen to do nothing and stand by watching town centre businesses close? Even after they have been warned by the people at the sharp end that this scheme is the cause?

Are you Mr Lythgo prepared to stand by and watch the death of a town? Because 61 of us are telling you that is what is happening here.

Businesses are starting to close. Creams Tea Room on Market street just a few weeks ago and now Westgate Barbers on Westgate has announced its closing just this morning. This is the first one of our members who is now having to close. And more are now so on the edge they will follow.

We are writing to you as leader to request that you over-see a full and fair review of this bus-gates scheme and its effect on town centre footfall, traffic flow and business turnover. The council should be monitoring this NOW and this review needs to take place URGENTLY, as businesses are under too much financial strain after the recession for this to be prolonged any further. Just go yourself and ask the town centre businesses and shop-keepers about it. Go and ask town centre users about it too, like we have done. Go and stand on the corner of Kirkgate and Westgate and see how few people there are on a Saturday afternoon. I urge you and your Managers of the scheme to do this and you will see what we are talking about for yourselves.

We URGENTLY need this matter on the agenda of the next council meeting and we wish to be present at the meeting to express our opinions. Please advise when this can be arranged in addition to the meeting with yourself, that we have already requested in our last letter.

Yours Faithfully

Alisa Devlin @ La Fleur Florist
on Behalf of HTCAG

Town centre Action Group representatives:-

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Gina Hanselman-Merrie England 01484 538054

Paul Keighley- Bramleys 01484 530361

Taran Rayt -Woods Menswear 01484 917119

Tom Scott- Westgate Barbers 01484 900191

Asam Sharif- Bronx Menswear 01484 435340Paul

Members

Town News

Cartridge world

RSPCA Charity Shop

The Keys Restaurant

Huddersfield Electronics

M&S Jewellery

Urban Escape

Endemic Skate Shop

Westgate Cobblers

The Blue Rooms

Calder Graphics

Med One

Arcade Beer shop

Vox Bar

Mackinleys Carribean food store

Indigo Clothing

The Little Kitchen

Ex service Taxis

Department 44

A1 Stationary Stores

Benetton

Horners Jewellers

Kirkwood Hospice charity shop

Tag Hair Design

Mitchells Butchers

Revival Fancy Dress

Crafty Praxis

Zephyr Bar

Coffee Evolution

John William News

Zuuton Swarma Takeaway

Kebabish

Icestone ice cram parlour

Better future for the blind Charity

IKonkar taxis

Lynn's Cafe

Café Society

Hair Haus

Studio 18

The Polish Corner

Wood Street Bar

Mark Riley

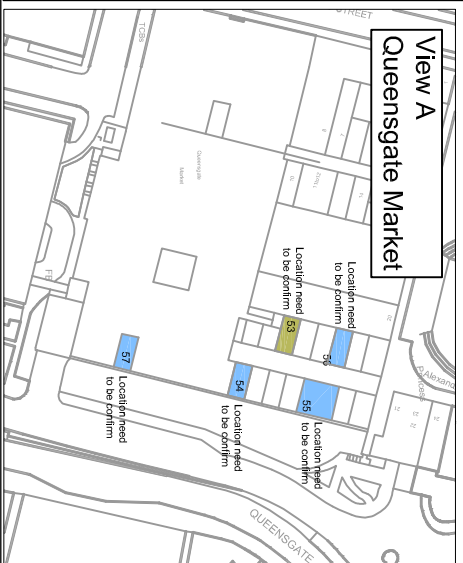
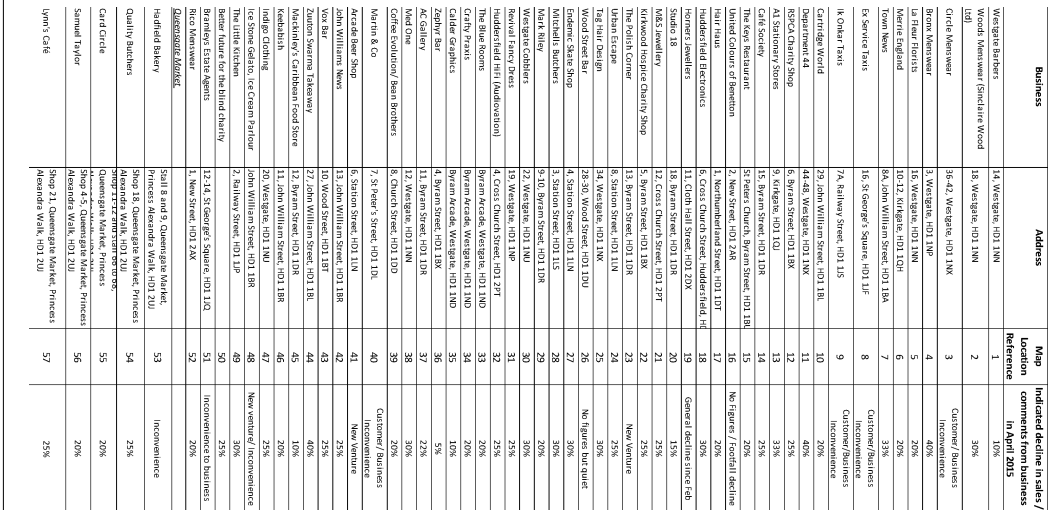
Huddersfield HiFi

Blue Rooms

AC Gallery

Martin & Co

Circle Menswear



Colour	Percentage reported loss of trade (May 2016)
	0 - 9
	10 - 19
	20 - 29
	30 - 40
	General decline but no specific figures given

General decline but no specific figures given

Steven Hanley

From: Richard Hadfield
Sent: 14 July 2017 10:51
To: Steven Hanley
Subject: FW: Huddersfield Town Centre Connectivity Project Evaluation Report -- Business Information Request

Appendix 3 – for the report

Thanks Richard

From: Richard Hadfield
Sent: 13 June 2017 11:44
To: 'william.mahony@columbiathreadneedle.com'; 'steven.leigh@mycci.co.uk'; 'alisa.devlin@ntlworld.com'; 'jonathan.hardy@kingsgateshoppingcentre.net'; 'vernon@piazzacentre.co.uk'; Chris Cotton; Matthew Garbutt; 'pwright@nrr.co.uk'
Cc: Richard Hadfield; Paul Kemp; Steven Hanley; Paul Hawkins
Subject: Huddersfield Town Centre Connectivity Project Evaluation Report -- Business Information Request

Dear Sir or Madam

Huddersfield Town Centre Connectivity Project Evaluation Report

You may be aware that the council is preparing an evaluation report on the operation of the Town Centre Connectivity project that included the installation of the bus gate cameras in March 2016 .

Huddersfield town centre serves lots of different purposes for lots of different people. Our intention is for the report to cover a full range of indicators of the scheme's impact .

One of the areas that it is important to have information on is the impact that the scheme has had on business activity in the town centre . I am therefore asking for you to submit any evidence on this issue that you would like to be considered as part of the report.

As I hope you will appreciate attempting to directly contact all the businesses in the town centre would be a very lengthy job. As you are someone who represents either the landlords of one of the main business areas of the town or a town centre partnership group can I request you to provide me with any comments you wish to make, either from your perspective or from within your networks. In respect of any comments as to financial impacts clearly these can be given more weight if they can be evidenced. I fully appreciate that you may wish any evidence, particularly if it is of a financial nature to be anonymous in the discussion of the subsequent report and I am of course prepared to give this commitment.

I am intending to take the report to the Council's Cabinet meeting scheduled for August 22nd and would therefore be grateful to receive any information you may wish to supply either directly or on behalf of your networks by Tuesday July 25th.

If you have any queries on the process please contact me or in my absence , Paul Hawkins (Operations Manager – Strategy and Design)

Please can you acknowledge receipt of this email .

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.



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Huddersfield Pedestrian Count Points



Key to map:



-  Pedestrian count point number
-  Position and direction to be counted

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Bus Station (out only) | 9 | Queensgate steps |
| 2 | New Street (Primark) | 10 | Kingsgate main entrance |
| 3 | Piazza | 11 | Market Street |
| 4 | New Street (M&S) | 12 | High Street |
| 5 | King Street | 13 | Southgate |
| 6 | Westgate | 14 | Sainsburys (in only - both sides) |
| 7 | Byram Street | 15 | Pack Horse Centre |
| 8 | John William Street | 16 | Cross Church Street |

Huddersfield Pedestrian Count Points - Six Sites only



Key to map:

-  Pedestrian count point number
-  Position and direction to be counted

- 1 King Street
- 2 Westgate
- 3 Queensgate steps
- 4 Kingsgate main entrance
- 5 Market Street
- 6 High Street

Huddersfield Town Centre
Access and Connectivity
Project

Impact Assessment Report
July 2017

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1 Introduction

During 2015 / 2016 Kirklees Council delivered an Access and Connectivity project in Huddersfield town centre. Among the range of measures implemented, the scheme introduced Bus Gate enforcement cameras on five main streets which went live in February 2016. Following their introduction, representation was made via an open letter to the Council, that 61 businesses had suffered a significant (up to 30%) decline in trade and were close to shutting and that the cameras should be removed.

This representation was discussed at a Council meeting on the 9 November 2016 under Item 6 Deputations / Petitions and Item 7 Questions by the Public where it was agreed by the Cabinet Member for Transport; Skills; Jobs and Regional Affairs that an assessment into the impacts of the Bus Gates would be provided after spring of 2017.

This report sets out the indicators and evidence that has been considered to provide an evaluation of the impact of the 'Access and Connectivity Project' against its original aims together with an overview of changes noted within the town centre since implementation of the scheme.

2 Background and Aims of the Project

Building on the Huddersfield Urban Renaissance Strategic Development Framework (March 2004) and the Huddersfield Town Centre Area Action Plan (August 2009) consultation process, town centre users (including businesses, residents, workers, shoppers, students and transport providers) told the Council that the following issues were important to them as Huddersfield developed in the future:-

- Being able to get around the town centre, easily and safely – for Huddersfield to be an accessible town;
- That the town centre should encourage different uses;
- That quality retailing is available to all;
- That high quality buildings and public spaces are created and maintained. But overall that they should all complement one another and connect up to create a town centre which works for everyone.

In recent years there has been an increased amount of activity and redevelopment just outside the town centre, for example: relocation of Kirklees College, expansion of Huddersfield University, new student accommodation and a new Sports Centre. The Council needs to ensure that these and future developments enhance and help sustain the main town centre area (within the ring road).

High quality, safe, easy access and connectivity for users of all modes of transport are amongst the most important building blocks of a sustainable and thriving economy and are essential to the future vitality of any town centre.

The main objectives of the proposals for the Huddersfield Access and Connectivity project (2016) were concerned with improving public transport reliability and the pedestrian experience of the town. (Report to Cabinet – 6th June 2014)

Within the town centre there are three key corridors for public transport to service the town:

- A. Westgate / Kirkgate;
- B. Market Street / Railway Street; and
- C. High Street / Peel Street (Town Hall area)

Market Street, Westgate and Kirkgate had Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that restricted movement of vehicles, already in place for many years (since 1983) but they were frequently ignored and there were high volumes of circulating traffic running through the town centre, seeking limited on-street parking spaces or just trying to get as close as possible to specific locations. Both the unauthorised and high circulating traffic movements caused delay to public transport.

To overcome these issues the Huddersfield Town Centre Access and Connectivity project proposed the following measures:

- Bus Gates with enforcement cameras;
- improvements to the public realm;
- alterations to traffic movements;
- alterations to parking areas; and
- introduction of new loading bays

3 Project Implementation and subsequent letter of complaint from businesses (May 2016)

The Town Centre project and Bus Gate enforcement cameras became operational in Huddersfield town centre in February 2016 along the following routes:

- A. Market Street / Railway Street;
- B. Westgate / Kirkgate; and
- C. High Street / Peel Street (Town Hall area)

Prior to switch on of the enforcement cameras the bus gates were widely publicised and included variable message signs located around the town centre and ring road.

Between 1 February and 13 March, warning notices, rather than fines, were issued to enable users of the town centre an opportunity to become familiar with the locations and operational times; during this period, 15,004 warning notices were issued.

The introduction of the bus gates coincided with the start of major gas works at the junction of Kirkgate, Westgate, John William Street and Market Place, which had a significant disruptive impact on the town centre at that time.

The gas works ended in early May 2016 but were then followed by major road resurfacing works in similar areas in June and July 2016. Bus Gates enforcement was suspended whilst the resurfacing works were ongoing.

In May 2016 the Council received an open letter from 3 representatives of town centre businesses stating that 61 businesses had suffered reductions in trade of up to 30% and were close to shutting since the introduction of the bus gates. This letter called for the bus gates to be removed and the highway changes implemented to be reversed.

Council (9 November 2016) considered and debated the letter received (via the petitions process) and decided that the subject matter be referred to the appropriate Directorate for further investigation (Minute 67). A public question was also put to the Cabinet Member for Transport; Skills; Jobs and Regional Affairs regarding information on footfall figures on Westgate and when an assessment of the impact of the Bus Gates on the town centre would be carried out; a response was given that information would be available around springtime and that the town centre needed to settle down (Minute 67 / webcast) before an assessment could be undertaken.

Set out below, under Section 4, are the Evidence and Indicators that have been considered to provide an impact assessment of the 'Access and Connectivity Project'

4 Evidence and indicators

The following evidence and indicators have been considered in this report:

1. Letter May 2016 – Re decline in trade for Local Businesses
2. Information from businesses to evidence losses they have suffered (July 2017)
3. Recent retail or business changes in the town centre (April 2016 to April 2017)
4. Car parking figures across the town centre, both within and outside the ring road (April 2016 to March 2017)
5. Bus journey times (2014/15 compared to 2016/17)
6. Penalty Charge Notices issued (February 2016 to April 2017)
7. Vehicles passing through the Bus Gates and Vehicles removed from Bus Gate locations (February 2016 to April 2017)
8. Retail floor occupancy rates in the town centre (April 2016 to April 2017)
9. Footfall in the town centre (April 2016 to April 2017)
10. Air Quality within the town centre

4.1 Letter May 2016 - Local Businesses suffering losses

61 businesses were stated to have suffered a severe decline in trade due to the introduction of the Bus Gates in an open letter to the council in May 2016. The original letter is shown in Appendix 1. The locations and names of the businesses reporting trade losses are shown in Appendix 2, however only 57 business were listed.

There are circa 800 businesses trading in Huddersfield town centre i.e. within the Ring Road.

The biggest cluster of businesses claiming a negative impact appeared to be in the Westgate area; very few businesses were listed from the High Street area.

A walk around the town centre by a Kirklees officer in early Oct 16, found that (of those 57 businesses that indicated they had suffered decline in trade and said they were close to shutting) there appeared to be little change in the occupancy rate.

A further review of the 57 businesses was undertaken in April 2017; this found that four businesses had closed with 2 businesses running closing down sales.

Table 1 lists the businesses (from the list of 57 businesses) that are closing down or have closed since May 2016 and the current use of the retail unit that the business occupied.

Table 1– Businesses closed or closing down since May 2016 (April 2017) (from list of 57 businesses)

Business	Map location reference	Address	Status	Current unit use
Woods Menswear	2	18 Westgate	Closing down posters in windows	Still occupied by Woods Menswear
Huddersfield, Electronics	18	6 Cross Church Street	Closed	Empty Unit
Mitchells Butchers	28	3 Station Street	Closed	Empty Unit
Zuuton Swarma Takeaway	44	27 John William Street	Closed	Convenience Store
Rico Menswear	52	1 New Street	Closing down 23 April	Empty Unit
O'Neill's Sports shop	Tbc	Tbc	Moved to Milnsbridge	tbc

An email has recently been received from a representative of the Huddersfield Town Centre Action Group providing a list of other business that have closed since May 2016.

Table 2 – Other Businesses closed since May 2016 (other than original list of 57 businesses)

Business	Address
Huddersfield Pet Supplies	Queensgate Market
Fresh Choice Fruit & Veg	Queensgate Market
Nightline	Queensgate Market
Barefoot Era	Queensgate Market
Discovery Bay	
Northern Taps	
The Blue Rooms	
The Spurn (yarn shop)	
Wood Street Bar	

4.2 Information from businesses to evidence losses

In June 2017 the council sent out a letter (Appendix 3) to representatives of the town centre partnership groups and to landlords of the main business areas in the town centre. The letter asked the recipients to submit any evidence they wished on the project so that it could be considered as part of this evaluation report.

The letter generated five responses. The responses have mostly been individual or anecdotal views little factual evidence has been received.

1) Ms Alisa Devlin (Representative of the Town Centre Action Group)

Ms Devlin's response (email dated 27 June 2017) says "that since summer 2016, 11 businesses have closed and that 3 other businesses are looking to move out of the town centre".

Ms Devlin feels that "the council should write to all town centre businesses directly and send them a specific questionnaire about the project"

The letter ends with Ms Devlin repeating the loss in trade decline figures for the businesses that she submitted in her original letter to the council May 2016.

2) Ms Gina Hanselman (Director of Merrie England Coffee Shops and Representative of Town Centre Action Group)

Ms Hanselman's response (email dated 25th July 2017) raises 2 main issues :-

- She states that "as a business that has been trading for nearly 50 years in Huddersfield town centre, they have seen a significant decline in footfall, not only in their cafes but in the streets in general, which occurred quite sharply after the Bus gates were installed".
- She feels that "a questionnaire or survey should have been sent out by the council to assess what sales decline has taken place for all town centre businesses" and is disappointed that the council have not done that.

3) Mr Vernon O'Reilly (Centre Manager , Piazza Centre Huddersfield)

The views that Mr O'Reilly provided in response to the council request, can be summarised as follows:-

- "The piazza centre in Huddersfield accommodates approximately 20 retail businesses of varying sizes"
- "From discussions held with these businesses comparing the last 12 months trading with the previous 12 months trading, around 15% of them have indicated that their trading position has got worse".

- “ Footfall figures for the centre in the last 12 months have also significantly reduced by up to 10% in the last year. This is set against an average UK drop of 3% in the year and a noticeable decline in our centre`s footfall figures after the British Homes Stores (BHS) business closed in Aug 2016 and the bus gates were installed ”.

4) Mr David Heathcote – Smith (Packhorse Centre Manager)

Mr Heathcote-Smith provided footfall information to the council for the Packhorse centre for the period 2015 – 2017 which he requested the council keep confidential, but he commented that “ the bus gates hadn`t really affected the Packhorse Centre trade or footfall” .

5) Mr Matthew Garbutt (Commercial Estate Manager, Kirklees Council)

The following comments were provided by Mr M Garbutt, in relation to the property/ tenants who rent commercial properties in the town centre from the Council

- *The council owns retail /office properties in the vicinity of the bus gates scheme which are home to approx. 50 local/regional businesses in the town centre :-*
 - *Estate Buildings*
 - *Byram Arcade*
 - *19/19A Westgate*
 - *Waverley Chambers*
 - *Kirkgate Buildings*
 - *Somerset Buildings*
- *In general there is a lack of demand for commercial space in Huddersfield Town Centre with a large number of private units currently vacant. In my experience this void and tenant turnover rate is similar to what it was prior to bus gates. At present we have one High Street Unit and three retail units within Byram Arcade which are vacant and on the market to let.*
- *Town Centre rental values took a hit in the late 2000`s and early 2010`s due to the economic downturn. In my experience Council rents have remained stable since this time and the bus gates have not had a significant detrimental effect on rental levels.*

4.3 Recent retail changes in Huddersfield town centre

virtualhuddersfield.com, a local website to help people plan their shopping and business trips to Huddersfield and surrounding villages and also providing promotional services to local businesses provides evidence of 5 new openings in Huddersfield town centre in 2017 (to July) with around 40 in 2016. The range of openings for 2017 is shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3 – changes in Huddersfield town centre in 2017 according to virtualhuddersfield.com

COMPANY	BUSINESS	STREET/AREA	CHANGE
RICO	Mens Fashion	New Street	Moved
JD SPORTS	Sports Supplies	Kingsgate Centre	Open
THE BALLOON PEOPLE	Special Occasions	Piazza Centre	Open
MEN'S SHED	Community Group	St. George's Square	Open
CUTE	Fashion	Packhorse Centre	Open
THE PEPPERCORN	Vegetarian Restaurant	Trinity Street	Open 11th April
HUDDERSFIELD PHARMACY	Chemist & Coffee Shop	Market Street	Open
BUBBLES, BATH'S & BARK'S	Dog Grooming	Viaduct Street	Open 15th March
ADELE TAYLOR DANCE	Dance School	Packhorse Centre	Open 12th March.
THE LITTLE CANDLE & HOME CO.	For the Home	Market Ave.	Open
BEAUFORT FINCH	Property Agent	John William Street	Open
HUDDERSFIELD COCKTAIL CLUB	Cocktail Bar	John William Street	Open
HALO	Nails & Spa	Packhorse Centre	Open
BLUE GREY CHEVRON	Turf Accountant	St. Peters Street	Open
ADAN	Health Fruit Drinks	Cross Church St.	Open

Other notable changes seen in the town centre during 2016/17 are :-

COMPANY	BUSINESS	STREET/AREA	CHANGE
MILLETS	Outdoor Clothing	New Street	Open
BHS STORES	Major Retailer	Victoria Lane	Closed
PATISSERIE VALERIE	Cake shop / cafe	King Street	Open
USC	Clothing / Footwear	Piazza	Open

4.4 Car parking income (visitors to the town)

Council car parking income has been reviewed for off street car parks and on-street pay and display parking, both within the town centre and around the ring road for the following two periods:

April 2015 to March 2016; and
April 2016 to March 2017

There have been no changes to car parking charges during these periods and therefore parking income can be used as an indicator of visitors to the town centre.

The car parking income figures are shown in Table 4 below

Table 4– Car parking income comparisons

Location	Income Apr to Mar		Change (Qty)	Change (%)
	2015-16	2016-17		
Within ring road				
On-street	£718,566	£671,023	- £47,543	- 6.62
Car parks	£1,465,791	£1,539,163	+ £73,372	+ 5.01
Totals	£2,184,357	£2,210,186	+ £25,830	+ 1.18
Outside ring road				
On-street	£264,796	£284,722	+ £19,927	+ 7.53
Car parks	£751,882	£706,409	- £45,473	- 6.05
Totals	£1,016,678	£991,131	- £25,547	- 2.51
Gross Totals	£3,201,034	£3,201,317	+ £283	+ 0.01

Summary of findings:

- ***Allowing for annual variations, car parking income for Council operated car parks appears to be the same since introduction of the Bus Gates.***
- ***Within the town centre (within the ring road) there has been an overall increase in income of 1.18%.***

4.5 Bus journey-times

Bus journey-times have been obtained from Metro using the real time information system that is in use on West Yorkshire buses.

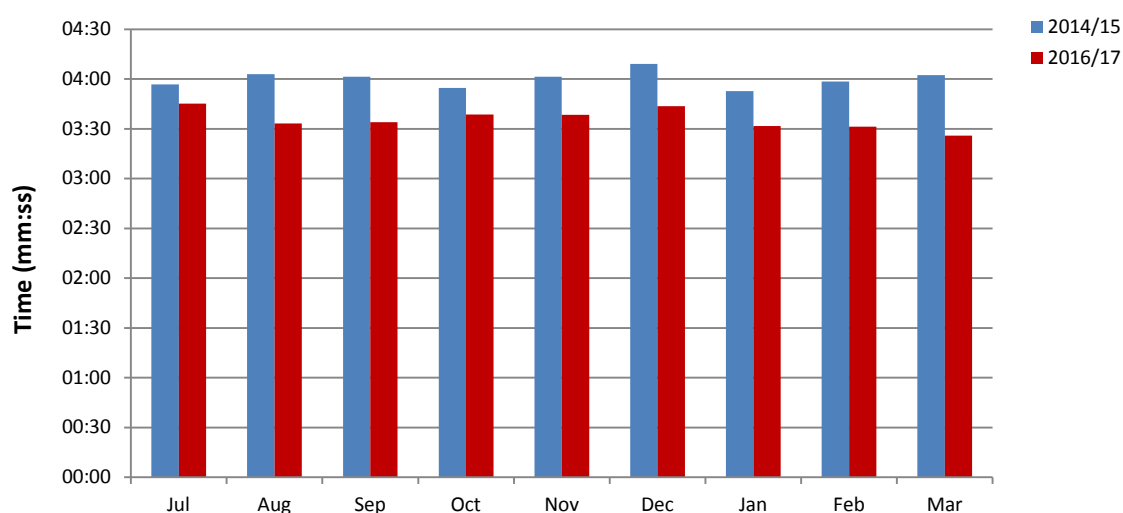
Unfortunately, when one looks back to find time periods in previous years to provide a true comparison over the full time period (comparisons between 2015 and 2016), it is not possible due to the extent of highway roadworks and the utility roadworks that were undertaken in the town centre over similar months.

The most suitable and appropriate time period(s) over which data has been compared therefore is in the years 2014/15 to 2016/17:

- Kirkgate / Westgate – July to March; and
- High Street – September to May

Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 show monthly average journey times and journey time savings for the three routes as follows:

**Table 5 - Monthly average bus journey times comparison
For Kirkgate to Trinity Street (excluding layover at Westgate)**



**Table 6 Monthly average journey time savings (per trip) in 2016/17 compared to 2014/15
For Kirkgate to Trinity Street (excluding layover at Westgate)**

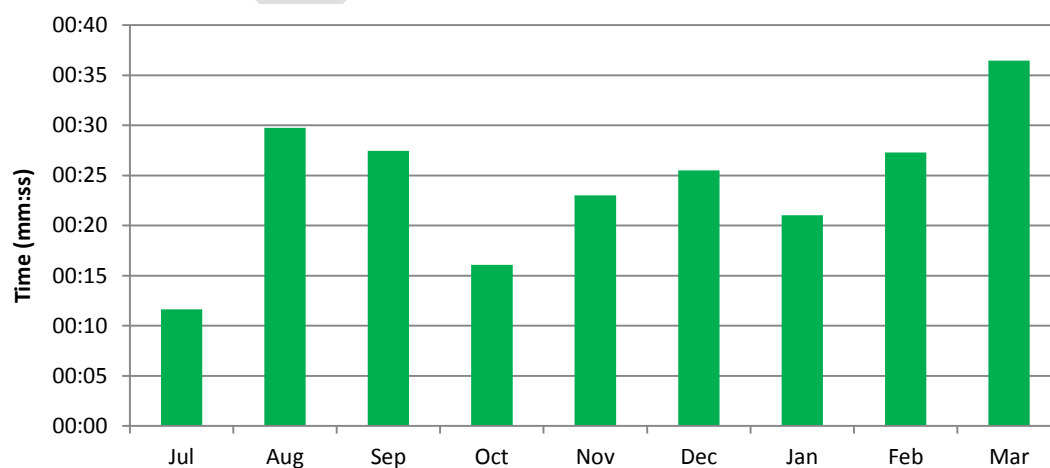


Table 7 Monthly average bus journey times comparison for High Street

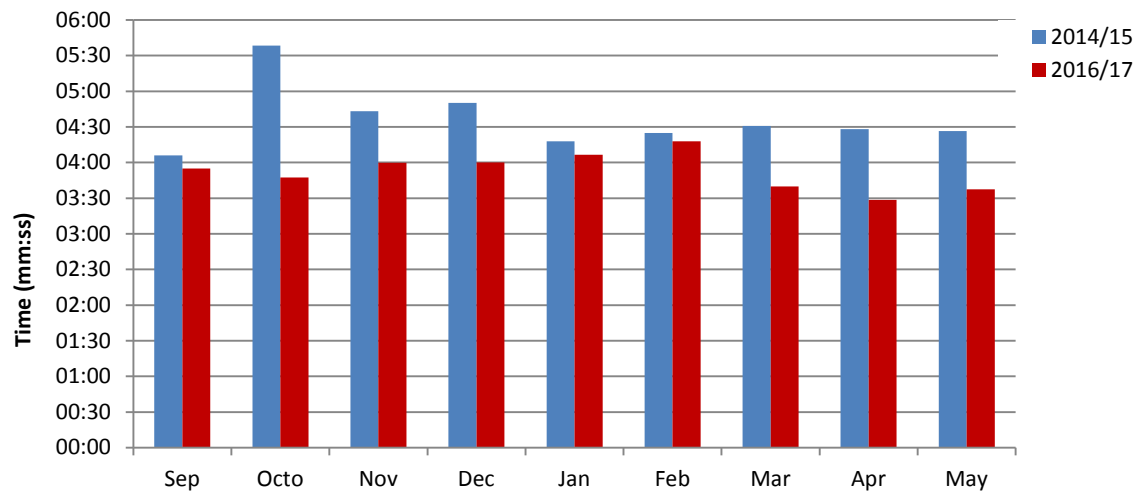


Table 8 Average monthly journey time savings (per trip) in 2016/17 compared to 2014/15 for High Street

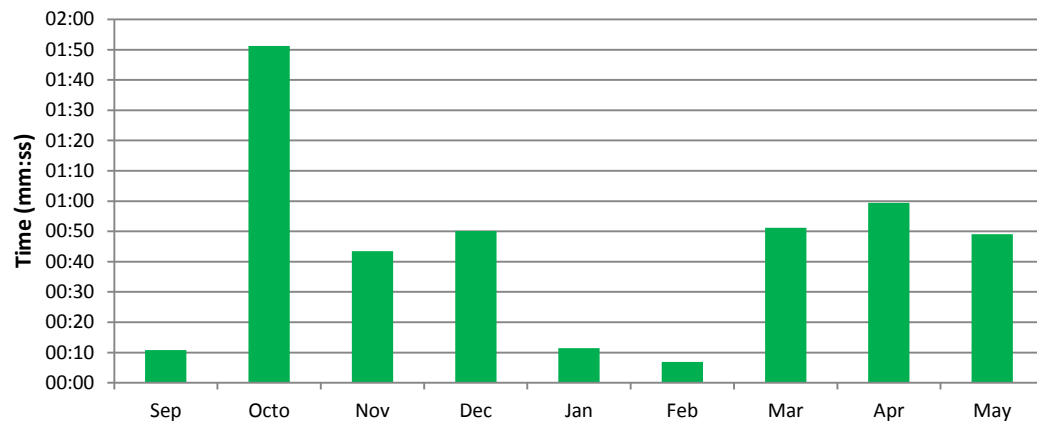


Table 9 Monthly average bus journey times comparison for Market Street / Railway Street

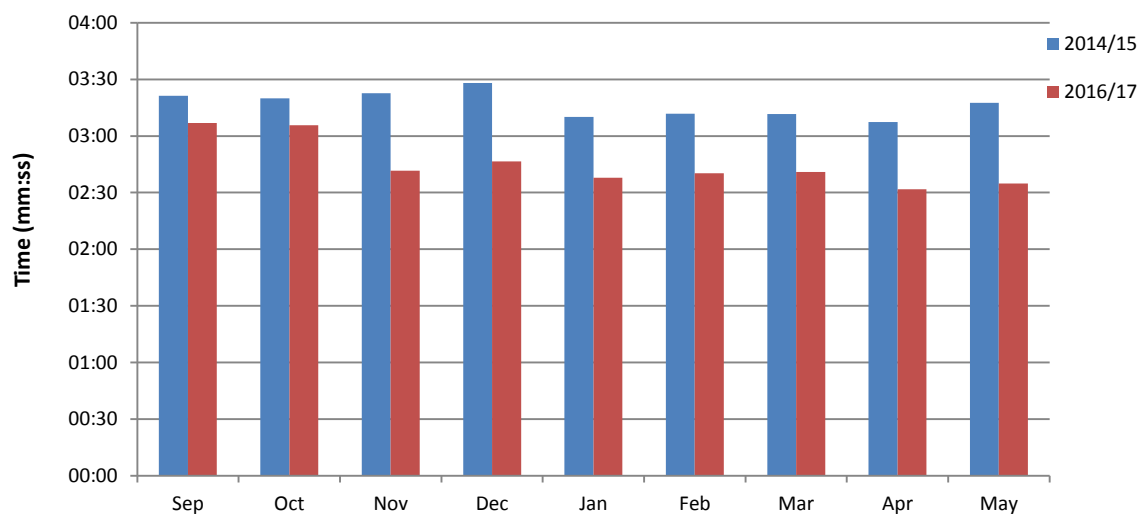
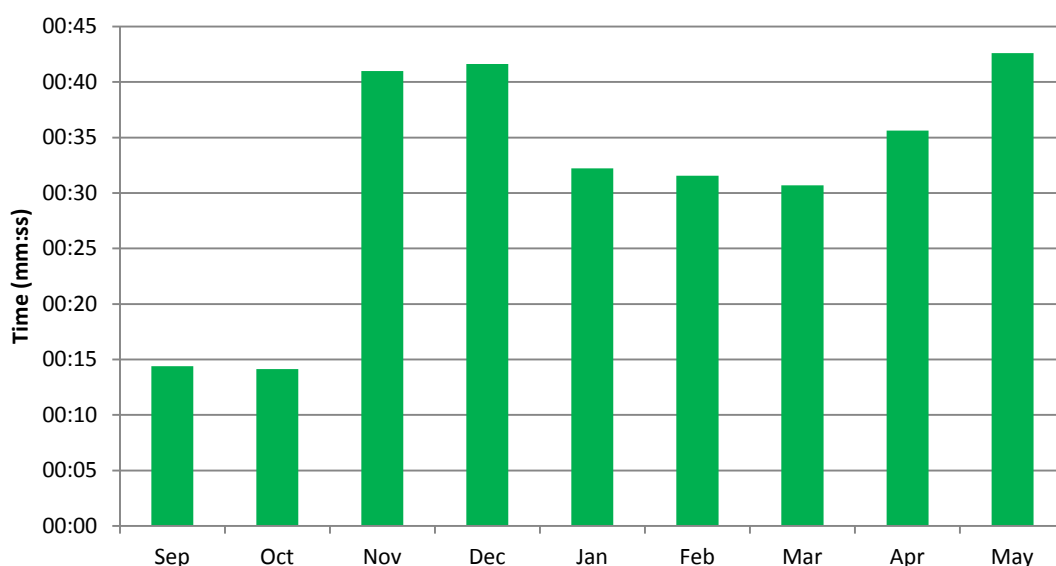


Table 10 Average monthly journey time savings (per trip) in 2016/17 compared to 2014/15 for Market Street / Railway Street



Summary of findings:

The data shows a positive trend in journey times. This is also supported by bus operators who have provided the following quotes:

First - Oliver Howarth (Operations Director (West))

'The bus gates have eliminated a great deal of rat running across Huddersfield town centre by private motorists, minicabs and vans. This has clearly improved bus service reliability and punctuality. Punctuality for our services in the town centre has improved by 8-12% and data from the GPS fitted to all our buses tells us that the time required to get in or out of the town centre is dramatically reduced. The success of the scheme implemented by Kirklees has led me to recommend its adoption by other highway authorities.'

Yorkshire Tiger - Paul Moses (Operations manager Honley Depot):

'I think the Town Centre moves very well, after working in Leeds where a breakdown would cause untold misery, Huddersfield Town Centre is very well controlled and major issues are infrequent even when the motorway has issues.'

Arriva - Mark Fenwick (General Manager Heckmondwike depot)

'there has been improvements in journey times, the more carefully controlled flow of traffic in Huddersfield town centre is certainly helpful, especially at junction, particularly traffic lights as queues aren't as long and even at busy times it isn't taking as many cycles of the lights to clear the junction.'

Any removal of the bus gates would have a negative impact on our punctuality and given this is one of the highest priorities customers highlight to us in terms of

what they expect from us, we could not support anything that would have a detrimental effect.'

4.6 Penalty Charge Notice's (PCN's) issued and authorised vehicles passing through Bus Gates

An analysis has been undertaken to quantify the number of penalty charge notices issued (PCN's) along with the number of vehicles passing through the bus gates during operational and non-operational hours since the Bus Gate enforcement cameras became operational on the 1st February 2016.

Between 1 February and 13 March, the bus gates were widely publicised and warning notices (rather than PCN's) were issued to enable users of the town centre an opportunity to become familiar with the locations and operational times; during this period, 15,004 warning notices were issued;

PCN's commenced being issued from the 21st March 2016 except for the following periods:

- Between 21 June and 13 July (2016) - due to extensive roadworks being carried out in the town centre; and
- Between 02 and 29 August 2016 - due to the Council awaiting the outcome of a judicial review of the bus gates.

There has therefore been 330 enforcement days for the period being analysed.

Tables 11, 12 and 13 show the results of the analysis; whilst Table 14 shows the daily average PCN's issued for the last three months compared to the first three months of enforcement.

Table 11 - Vehicles passing through Bus Gates and PCN's issued for whole period (21 March 2016 to 9 April 2017)

		Vehicles passing through Bus Gates						Penalty Charge Notices issued	
		all hours		during operational hours		during non-operational hours			
Bus Gate Zone	Bus Gates Operational Hours	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.
High Street	10am to 4pm	147,641	447	62,205	189	85,436	259	1,018	3
Market Street / Railway Street (St Georges Square)	8am to 6pm	449,134	1361	174,046	527	275,088	834	20,875	64
Westgate / Kirkgate (uphill)	8am to 6pm	222,033	673	96,338	173	125,695	337	2,195	7
Westgate / Kirkgate (downhill)	8am to 6pm	168,373	510	57,011	292	111,362	381	4,424	13
Totals (all cameras)	n/a	987,181	2991	389,900	1,182	597,581	1,811	28,512	86

Table 12 - Vehicles passing through Bus Gates and PCN's issued first three months (21 March to 19 June 2016)

		Vehicles passing through Bus Gates						Penalty Charge Notices issued	
		all hours		during operational hours		during non-operational hours			
Bus Gate Zone	Bus Gates Operational Hours	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.
High Street	10am to 4pm	37,547	417	15,808	176	21,739	242	411	5
Market Street / Railway Street (St Georges Square)	8am to 6pm	150,401	1671	60,195	669	90,206	1,002	7,004	78
Westgate / Kirkgate (uphill)	8am to 6pm	32,947	366	13,937	155	19,010	211	1,574	17
Westgate / Kirkgate (downhill)	8am to 6pm	30,578	340	10,326	115	11,649	129	654	7
Totals (all cameras)	n/a	251,473	2,794	100,266	1,114	151,207	1,680	9,643	107

Table 13 - Vehicles passing through Bus Gates and PCN's issued last three months to 09 April 2017

		Vehicles passing through Bus Gates						Penalty Charge Notices issued	
		all hours		during operational hours		during non-operational hours			
Bus Gate Zone	Bus Gates Operational Hours	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave	Total	Daily Ave.	Total	Daily Ave.
High Street	10am to 4pm	40,638	489	17,011	203	23,627	285	171	2
Market Street / Railway Street (St Georges Square)	8am to 6pm	108,889	1312	44,701	489	64,188	773	4,092	49
Westgate / Kirkgate (uphill)	8am to 6pm	65,666	791	28,620	340	37,046	446	437	5
Westgate / Kirkgate (downhill)	8am to 6pm	47,867	577	17,431	198	30,436	367	959	12
Totals (all cameras)	n/a	263,060	3,169	107,763	1,230	155,297	1,871	5,659	68

Table 14 - Daily Average PCN's issued, first and last three month comparison

Bus Gate Zone	Bus Gates Operational Hours	Daily average PCN's issued	
		First Three Months	Last three months
High Street	10am to 4pm	5	2
Market Street / Railway Street (St Georges Square)	8am to 6pm	78	49
Westgate / Kirkgate (uphill)	8am to 6pm	7	5
Westgate / Kirkgate (downhill)	8am to 6pm	17	12
Totals (all cameras)	n/a	107	68

Summary of findings:

There are significant volumes of traffic passing the bus gates during non-operational hours (1,871 daily averages). When compared to the low numbers of PCN's being issued during operational hours, (68 daily averages) and considering that the daily average has reduced over the last twelve months; would suggest that:

- Drivers are becoming more aware of the presence of the bus gates;
- The majority of drivers are complying with the regulations;

4.7 Traffic flow comparisons at Bus Gates

The council's reasons for installing Bus Gate enforcement cameras were to:

- Provide journey time savings for public transport users
- Remove circulating and rat running traffic from the town centre
- Enforcement of existing regulations in place since 1983 thus removing non permitted vehicles
- Improve air quality within the town centre

Traffic volumes have been compared on a Saturday and a Tuesday during the operational hours of the Bus Gates before and after implementation to assess how effective the Bus Gates have been in achieving the objective of removing rat running and circulating traffic. Table 15 shows the Saturday comparison; Table 16 shows the Tuesday comparison and Table 17 shows the hourly average comparison between both days.

**Table 15 - Number of vehicle movements removed from
Bus Gate locations during operational hours (Saturday comparison)**

Bus Gate Location	Bus Gate operational hours	vehicle movements (before)	Vehicle movements (after)	vehicles removed	Hourly Average vehicles removed
Westgate (Railway St)	0800 to 1800	669	198	471	47
Kirkgate (John William St)	0800 to 1800	748	183	565	57
Kirkgate (Cross Church St)	0800 to 1800	866	304	562	56
High Street	1000 to 1600	1,025	289	736	123
Market St (Westgate)	0800 to 1800	1,472	419	1,053	105
Railway St (St Georges Square)	0800 to 1800	2,680	593	2,087	209
Totals		7,460	1,986	5,747	597

**Table 16 - Number of vehicle movements removed from
Bus Gate locations during operational hours (Tuesday comparison)**

Bus Gate Location	Bus Gate operational hours	vehicle movements (before)	vehicle movements (after)	Vehicle movements removed	Hourly Average vehicles movements removed
Westgate (Railway St)	0800 to 1800	2,412	202	2210	221
Kirkgate (John William St)	0800 to 1800	495	194	301	30
Kirkgate (Cross Church St)	0800 to 1800	870	234	636	64
High Street	1000 to 1600	1,025	224	801	133
Market St (Westgate)	0800 to 1800	3,159	214	2,945	294
Railway St (St Georges Square)	0800 to 1800	2,380	213	2,167	217
Totals		10,341	1,281	9,060	959

**Table 17 – Hourly average of number of vehicles removed from
Bus Gate locations during operational hours
Tuesday and Saturday comparison**

Bus Gate Location	Bus Gate operational hours	Hourly Average vehicles removed (Tuesday)	Hourly Average vehicles removed (Saturday)
Westgate – downhill (Railway St)	0800 to 1800	-221	-47
Kirkgate – downhill (John William St)	0800 to 1800	-30	-57
Kirkgate – uphill (Cross Church St)	0800 to 1800	-64	-56
High Street (New Street end)	1000 to 1600	-133	-123
Market St (Westgate end)	0800 to 1800	-294	-105
Railway St (St Georges Sqr)	0800 to 1800	-217	-209
Totals		959	597

Summary of findings:

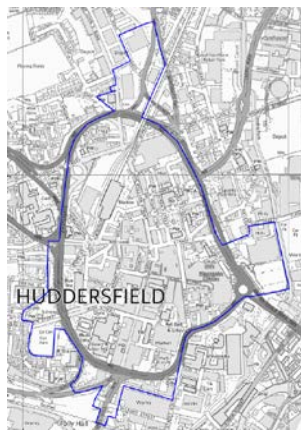
The comparisons show:

- There has been a significant reduction in traffic volumes at the bus gate locations;
- The objective of removing non permitted vehicles from key bus route and pedestrian areas has been achieved;
- Drivers are aware of the presence of the bus gates; and
- The majority of drivers are complying with the regulations.

4.8 Town centre occupancy rates

Occupancy rates for the town centre are surveyed on an annual basis in April. The extent of the study area is shown in Figure 2

Figure 1 – Huddersfield town centre occupancy study area



The surveys show yearly comparisons (2014 – 2017) by:-

- a) Number of Units by sector, as shown in Table 18; and
- b) Floor space area by sector, as shown in Table 19

Table 18 – Number of units by category and years (2014 to 2017)

Sector	Number of units by year				Percentage change
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2016/17
Comparison	235	225	227	218	-4
Convenience	56	57	54	58	-7.4
Financial & Business Services	85	83	83	76	-8.4
Leisure Services	181	181	182	180	-1.1
Retail Service	84	82	78	86	+10.26
Sub Total	641	628	624	618	
Vacant or under refurbishment	112	122	118	124	+5.09
Total	753	750	742	742	

Table 19 - Gross ground floor floorspace by category and years (2014 to 2017)

Sector	Count (m2)				Percentage change
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2016/17
Comparison	53586	52669	53514	50620	-5.4
Convenience	28319	28515	28282	28472	+6.8
Financial & Business Services	10434	10184	10200	9295	-8.9
Leisure Services	25169	24358	24387	23452	-3.8
Retail Service	7040	6828	6501	7404	+13.9
Sub Total	124,548	122,554	122,884	119,243	
Vacant or under refurbishment	14277	15711	14451	18404	+27.4
Total	138,825	138,265	137,335	137,647	

Summary of Findings:

- The total number of occupied units has reduced year on year from 2014 to 2016, but shows a more marked decline from 2014 to 2015, than in following years.
- Overall floor-space has decreased steadily year on year since 2014 at an average of 1.3% per annum.

4.9 Town centre footfall surveys

Annual footfall counts have been done in Huddersfield town centre by the Planning service for many years. There are 16 sites spread across the town centre, as shown in Appendix 6. Counts are typically done on an annual basis; the most recent being undertaken in April 2017.

During 2016, footfall counts were redone in late Sept to provide an interim comparison with the annual April count, although only at 6 key locations (from the normal 16), as shown in Appendix 7 in and around the bus gate areas.

Comparisons have been made for these six locations on Market Day, None Market Day, Saturday and the Combined Totals, as shown in Tables 20, 21, 22 and 23 respectively:-

Note

- **April 2015 should be viewed as the base figures prior to the bus gates installation in February 2016**
- **The April figures are the best comparisons as they have been done at the same time each year.**

Table 20 - Market Day footfall counts comparison

MARKET DAY	Apr 2015	Apr 2016	Sep 2016	Jan 2017	Apr 2017
King Street	4712	5763	6431	5182	5338
Westgate	1800	2546	3024	1981	2404
Queensgate steps	707	568	1053	823	860
Kingsgate entrance	4062	4102	5128	4781	3990
Market Street	4020	2207	1983	3265	2385
High Street	2101	2370	2261	2568	2287
Totals	17402	17556	19880	18600	17264

Table 21 – Non-Market Day footfall counts comparison

NON-MARKET DAY	Apr 2015	Apr 16	Sep 16	Jan 17	Apr17
King Street	5581	4581	5045	4590	3870
Westgate	1570	1813	1489	1492	1810
Queensgate steps	513	1062	1016	747	878
Kingsgate entrance	3787	5901	4859	3922	3499
Market Street	2640	3510	2511	2634	3522
High Street	2034	2831	2067	2511	2320
Totals	16125	19698	16987	15896	15899

Table 22 – Saturday footfall counts comparison

SATURDAY	Apr 2015	Apr 2016	Sep 2016	Jan 2017	Apr 2017
King Street	8895	7977	8223	6868	7849
Westgate	2923	2258	2256	1774	1949
Queensgate steps	413	417	217	176	283
Kingsgate entrance	7125	7807	N/a	7857	6865
Market Street	4102	3498	2469	3535	4158
High Street	2272	2208	2058	1913	2171
Totals	25730	24165	15223	22123	23275

Table 23 – Combined (Tables 12, 13 and 14) Total footfall counts comparison

COMBINED	Apr 2015	Apr 2016	Sep 2016	Jan 2017	Apr 2017
King Street	19188	18321	19699	16640	17057
Westgate	6293	6617	6769	5247	6163
Queensgate steps	1633	2047	2286	1746	2021
Kingsgate entrance	14974	17810	N/a	16560	14354
Market Street	10762	9215	6963	9434	10065
High Street	6407	7409	6386	6992	6778
Totals	59257	61419	42103	56619	56438

Summary of findings:

- Market days and non-market days appear to have similar footfall across the town centre with High Street (market and non-market) and Westgate (non-market days only) showing increases in 2017 compared with 2015.
- Saturday footfall is significantly down (9.5%) in 2017 compared to 2015 within the town centre as a whole; but is more marked in Westgate than in High Street, however King Street accounts for a significant proportion of the reduction in footfall

4.10 Air Quality

Air quality monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) has been measured within the town centre since 2004 in accordance with National Government legislation and guidance.

The levels of Nitrogen Dioxide are measured on an annual basis at 9 sites across the study area. Five sites are located within the ring road with one of the sites located on Westgate.

The EU target levels (set in 2007) are as shown in Table 24; the critical figure is $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

Table 24 – extract of Nitrogen Dioxide thresholds from National Air Quality Objectives of the UK Air Quality Strategy

National air quality objectives and European Directive limit and target values for the protection of human health					
Pollutant	Objective	Concentration measured as	Date to be achieved (by and maintained thereafter)	European Obligations	Date to be achieved (by and maintained thereafter)
Nitrogen Dioxide	200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1 hour mean	31 December 2005	200 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1 January 2010
	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual mean	31 December 2005	40 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	1 January 2010

An Air Quality model for the town centre was developed in 2015 which has been used to determine the extent of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for the town; the Council is now in the process of declaring this to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DeFRA) meaning that the Council will have a legal duty to reduce air pollutants within the AQMA.

The model has been used to assess the potential impacts of the Bus Gates. The results show that no new areas of exposure would be created and that Westgate could achieve a $2\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (5%) reduction of NO_2 .

In addition to the model the annual recorded levels of NO_2 since 2012, in the town centre have been recorded and are shown in Table 25.

Table 25 - Year on Year levels of NO_2 within the town centre

Year	Annual NO_2 ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$)
2016	31.22
2015	44.81
2014	39.99
2013	46.33
2012	48.61

Public Health England advise that air pollution is the largest environmental risk linked to deaths and the Royal College of Physicians estimate that around 40,000 deaths per year in the UK are attributable to outdoor air pollution.

PHE also advise that national and local government can help to reduce air pollution by:











- promoting a shift from cars to walking and cycling
- promoting an integrated public transport system, which would help reduce congestion
- introducing Low Emissions Zones
- implementing parking restrictions

Summary of findings:

- The year on year monitoring survey suggests that there has been a significant reduction of NO₂ in 2016 when compared to the previous year. However, consideration should be given to changes in atmospheric conditions and other factors that may influence readings; therefore further monitoring would need to be done to confirm this trend.

4.11 Indicator Rag Ratings

To enable a quick identification of outcomes the indicators and objectives have been given a RAG rating (Red, Amber, and Green) to give a visual overview of the current status or as to whether objectives of the project have been met.

INDICATOR RAG RATING				
Indicator	RAG rating	Comments		
Car parking income		No change in Car parking income		
Vehicle movements removed		Significant number of circulating traffic removed from the town centre bus gate areas.		
Bus Journey times		Journey time reductions for buses achieved and support to scheme received from bus operators		
Drivers familiar with Bus Gates		Drivers appear to be aware of bus gates operations, with PCN numbers reducing, yet vehicles still using the routes out of hours.		
Occupancy		Previous years trend of number of vacant units increasing has not altered since bus gates were introduced		
Total Ground floor floorspace		0.45% less ground floor floorspace in 2017 compared to 2015 but note potential change of use to other than occupancy categories		
Footfall - Annual Counts 2014 / 2017 comparison: (figures in brackets are actual numbers)		Market	Non Market	Saturday
Town Centre as a whole		- 0.8% (-138)	- 1.4% (-226)	- 9.5% (-2455)
High Street		+8.9% (+186)	+14.06% (+286)	-4.45% (-101)
Westgate		-33.56% (-604)	+15.29% (+240)	-33.32% (-974)
Air Quality		Recorded decrease in Nitrogen Dioxide within the town centre proposed AQMA		

5 Summary of Findings

The initial letter to the council said that 61 businesses had suffered significant (up to 30%) decline in trade due to the Bus Gates implementation.

In addition to local factors, it is important to recognise that there are wider national and regional issues in play which impact on trading opportunities and performance.

Set out below is a summary of the findings from the indicators that have been considered:

5.1 Car park income

The overall car parking income for Council operated car parking spaces has marginally increased by 1.18% within the ring road. Whilst there has been a fall in on-street parking, there has been an increase within off-street car parks. This may indicate that drivers have not been deterred from visiting the town centre but are navigating the town centre in a different way.

5.2 Bus Journey times

Bus operators consider that the Bus Gates have been successful in terms of benefits to public transport. There are over 40 buses per hour operating both on High Street and Westgate / Trinity Street during the Bus Gate operational hours.

Bus journey times along these key corridors have seen a reduction varying between 10 seconds and 35 seconds on Westgate / Trinity Street and between 7 seconds and 1 min 50 seconds on High Street over the periods assessed.

The Bus Gates have had a positive impact on bus journey times.

5.3 Traffic Flow

Whilst traffic volumes at the Bus Gates during operational hours have dramatically decreased, volumes during non-operational hours remain high.

5.4 Town Centre Occupancy Rates

The total number of units has reduced year on year from 2014 to 2016 but there has been a more marked decline between 2014 and 2015 (641 to 628) than in the following years 2016 to 2017 (628 to 618)

The number of units empty or under refurbishment has increased from 118 to 124 (5.09%) between 2016 and 2017.

Overall ground-floor floor-space has decreased steadily year on year since 2014 at an average rate of 1.3% per annum but there has been an increase of 2.27% between 2016 and 2017.

5.5 Town centre footfall

Footfall figures for the town centre as a whole have gone down; 0.8% on Market Days, 1.4% on Non Market Days with Saturdays being the worst at 9.5% in 2017 compared to 2015. This trend is typical when considering footfall (according to IPSOS data February 2017) in the north had an average year-on-year (to February 2017) fall of 8.9 per cent, while the UK as a whole suffered an average 6.5 per cent decline over the same period.

When comparing Westgate and High Street footfalls, Westgate has a reduction of around 33% on Market Days and Saturdays but an increase of 15% on non-market days, whilst High Street shows a 4% reduction on Saturdays but 9% and 14% increase on market days and non-market days respectively.

These findings suggest that national and regional downward trends of town centre footfall appear to be reflected at a local level within Huddersfield town centre.

5.6 Air Quality

The year on year monitoring survey suggests that there has been a significant reduction of NO₂ in 2016 when compared to previous years although consideration should be given to changes in atmospheric conditions and other factors that may influence readings, therefore further monitoring would need to be done to understand whether the reduced values form part of a longer term trend.

These early findings indicate that the Bus Gates may be having a positive impact on Air Quality within the town centre.

5.7 Overall view

Considering all the indicators together it appears that the operation and trading picture of the town centre, or any specific parts of the town centre, is a complex one and there does not seem to be conclusive evidence that the installation of the bus gates has been the sole catalyst to a trading decline in the town centre.