

## Comparing 2 Shopping Centres

### Aims and Hypotheses

#### AIMS

1. To find out which shopping centre has the greatest variety and number of shops and services
2. To determine the quality of the shopping centres
3. To discover how large the catchment areas are of both shopping centres
4. To find out the proportion of convenience good shops to comparison good shops in the shopping centres
5. To determine as to whether pedestrian flow varies within each shopping centre

#### HYPOTHESES

1. Chester-le-Street has both a greater variety of shops and services and a larger number of shops and services than Birtley
2. Birtley has less comparison good shops than Chester-le-Street
3. The quality of both shopping centres could be improved by the provision of further amenities
4. Chester-le-Street has a much larger catchment area than Birtley
5. Pedestrian flow varies considerably along the main shopping street in each centre

### Organisation of Fieldwork

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Hypothesis 2 - results and analysis

Hypothesis 3 - results and analysis

Hypothesis 4 - results and analysis

Hypothesis 5 - results and analysis

Conclusion

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shops are in this area. Similarly, the area studied in Chester-le-Street focused on the main shopping area.

For the 'pedestrian flow' hypothesis each person was given a specific place to stand. To see who stood where, see figures 2 and 3 on pages 11 and 12. For example, I stood at point 9 indicated on the map for Birtley. At precisely 10:30am in Birtley, and 11:30am in Chester-le-Street, everyone made a tally of people passing them from each direction for a period of ten minutes. The tally was put into the box at the bottom of figure 4 on page 13.

For the 'where people came from' hypothesis and 'shopping centre improvement' hypothesis, we did a survey by randomly asking people to give each criteria a mark from 1-5. This is known as random sampling when you are not able to ask everyone, but ask a few people and hope they are representative of everyone. However, the time of day this survey was carried out meant that it was mainly old people who were asked and this could cause the results to become biased. Our class sample size was about 140. See my blank questionnaire, figure 4 on page 13 as an example of what I used.

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All questionnaires, tally charts etc will be found in the appendices.

#### Hypothesis 1

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My results seem to prove that my hypothesis is correct, because figure 8 shows that Birtley only has 86 shops and services compared to Chester-le-Street's 142. It also says that Chester-le-Street has an equal amount of comparison and convenience shops while Birtley has mainly convenience shops, and so less variety. Figure 7 clearly shows that Chester-le-Street has more variety, because Chester-le-Street's bars are higher in every category except food.

I think that my results prove that Chester-le-Street has a greater number and variety of shops and services than Birtley because Birtley is a smaller town than Chester-le-Street, so there is more locals to go shopping in Chester-le-Street. Also, people come from nearby towns and villages to shop at Chester-le-Street, while the majority of shoppers in Birtley live in Birtley.

My original hypothesis has been proved correct, which is that Chester-le-Street has both a greater variety of shops and services and a larger number of shops and services than Birtley. However, I don't think that my investigations proved without doubt that my hypothesis has been true. This is because that I didn't carry out my survey across the whole of Birtley or Chester-le-Street.

#### Hypothesis 2

My hypothesis was that Birtley has less comparison good shops than Chester-le-

Street. A convenience goods shop is a shop that sells everyday goods that you wouldn't expect people to compare prices between shops, for example a bakery. A comparison goods shop is a shop that sells expensive products that you would probably compare with other similar type shops, for example an electronic appliances store.

My results seem to back up that hypothesis, because, as figure 11 shows, Birtley has 28 comparison shops compared to Chester-le-Street's 55 comparison shops. That means that 39% of Birtley's shops are comparison shops, while 50% of the shops in Chester-le-Street are comparison shops.

I think that my results prove that Chester-le-Street has more comparison shops because Birtley is mainly for Birtley residents to do their day-to-day shopping, while Chester-le-Street is more likely to have people coming from other towns or villages especially to buy more expensive products, for example a television.

My original hypothesis, which was that Birtley has less comparison goods shops than Chester-le-Street was correct. However, I don't think that my investigation has proved without doubt that my hypothesis is true. This is because I believe that my fieldwork is limited as we only surveyed the main shopping centres of the respective towns, and not any shops in other parts of either Birtley or Chester-le-Street.

### Hypothesis 3

My hypothesis was that the quality of both shopping centres could be improved by the provision of further amenities.

My results do back up my hypothesis, as they both did not score brilliantly on the questionnaire which was carried out. Although Chester-le-Street performed better than Birtley, as can be seen from the two graphs, it only scored 1,865 points out of a possible 5,000 points. Birtley didn't even get half, scoring 1,454 out of 5,000. Figure 15 shows how both towns' scores compare with the total possible score. Figure 16 shows how Birtley and Chester-le-Street compared on each question, showing that Chester-le-Street did better on every single question. However, of the people I interviewed, both towns did better than the overall scores suggest. This can be shown on figure 18.

I think my results take this pattern because both Birtley and Chester-le-Street are old towns, and few new amenities have been built as the areas have become more run down. I don't think that either Birtley or Chester-le-Street are as bad as their respective scores in the questionnaires suggest.

My original hypothesis, that both shopping centres could be improved by the provision of further amenities has been proved true. To be more sure of my results, I would have more people asked the questionnaire as only a very small amount of people were asked it compared to the populations of the two towns.

### Hypothesis 4

My hypothesis was that Chester-le-Street has a much larger catchment area than Birtley.

This hypothesis is proven by the map figure 22, which proves that Chester-le-Street has more people coming from other towns than Birtley. Chester-le-Street's sphere of influence is far greater on the map than Birtley's sphere of influence is. Figures 20 and 21 also show the same pattern, which is that Chester-le-Street has far more shoppers from other towns than Birtley.

I think that this is the case because Chester-le-Street has a greater variety and number of shops than Birtley, so more people would prefer to go to Chester-le-Street than Birtley to do their shopping, especially if they want to buy an expensive good like a microwave or television. This is because their choice would be restricted if they went to Birtley, because there would then be less shops to visit.

My original hypothesis was proved correct, although I once again think that a greater number of people surveyed would have made my results far more accurate. This is because I don't believe that enough people were asked in proportion to the respective populations of Birtley and Chester-le-Street

#### Hypothesis 5

My hypothesis was that pedestrian flow varies considerably along the main shopping street in each centre.

My results, shown in figure 23, show that lots of pedestrians passed by point 9 in Birtley, and in points 8 and 6 in Chester-le-Street. Few pedestrians walked passed points 1 and 13 in Birtley and point 14 in Chester-le-Street. This can be shown visually on figures 24 and 25. Unfortunately, due to absences, there is no data available for points 3 and 4 in Birtley, and for points 9 and 12 in Chester-le-Street. My results seem to prove that the pedestrian flow varies along the respective shopping centres. For example, in Birtley, point 9 has far more people passing by than point 1. The difference between points 14 and 6 in Chester-le-Street is even greater. However, Birtley is mainly evenly spread out and not greatly varied apart from one or two points.

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I think it is difficult to say whether my original hypothesis has been proved true or false. This is because although Chester-le-Street's pedestrian flow is varied considerably, Birtley's is generally even throughout apart from a few exceptions, which are points 9, 13 and 1.

I think my results could have been improved by staying at our points for longer. This is because people who were at work while we were doing our pedestrian flow count may have gone to different places. For example, if the survey were done at night, the points nearby to pubs might have been busier, or if it were done during lunchtime, bakers and takeaways may have been busier.

#### Conclusion

I think that my coursework has proved that Chester-le-Street has a greater variety and number of shops, and also a better quality shopping centre than Birtley. This is why I believe that Chester-le-Street has a larger catchment area than Birtley. Another thing I have found is that Birtley has less comparison goods

shops in proportion to convenience goods shops compared to Chester-le-Street. This, in my opinion, is another reason why more people shop at Chester-le-Street than Birtley.

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I think my results could have been improved by staying at our points for longer. This is because people who were at work while we were doing our pedestrian flow count may have gone to different places. For example, if the survey were done at night, the points nearby to pubs might have been busier, or if it were done during lunchtime, bakers and takeaways may have been busier.

### Conclusion

I think that my coursework has proved that Chester-le-Street has a greater variety and number of shops, and also a better quality shopping centre than Birtley. This is why I believe that Chester-le-Street has a larger catchment area than Birtley. Another thing I have found is that Birtley has less comparison goods shops in proportion to convenience goods shops compared to Chester-le-Street. This, in my opinion, is another reason why more people shop at Chester-le-Street than Birtley.

I think that my project has been done fairly well, although I would have changed some things if I could. One thing I would have changed is the amount of people interviewed for the questionnaires, because only about 140 people were interviewed in each town, and that is a tiny amount compared with the populations of both Birtley and Chester-le-Street, so I cannot be sure that our findings were representative of everybody's views. I would also have preferred to have been given more time to do data collection, as I did have to work very efficiently to get everything done in time.