

Introduction To

Hitchin

In this coursework I will be looking at the shopping centres in Hitchin and in Palmers Green.

Hitchin is located in the north of Hertfordshire. Its population in 1991 was recorded as thirty-four thousand. Hitchin was founded in Saxon times and grew up as a market town for surrounding villages. It has many historic buildings such as St. Mary's Church, which was founded in Norman times. The town expanded in the 19th century as railways linked Hitchin to London and other towns.

Today Hitchin still has market twice a week and is a shopping centre for the town and the surrounding area. Many people that live in Hitchin work in nearby towns and cities such as Luton, London and Bedford.



Introduction To Palmers Green

Palmers Green is located in the north of London. In 1867, Palmers Green was a tiny hamlet and consisted of a cluster of cottages. Things dramatically changed in 1902 when many houses and estates were built as well as shopping parades. A tramway was built to link Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill in 1907.

Today Palmers Green is a small shopping centre for the people that live there and places nearby. It consists of big name superstores such as Sainsbury's supermarket, Woolworth's and Tesco.

Hitchin Questionnaire

1) Where do you live?

Hitchin= 20 Luton= 4 Hatfield= 9 Other= 7

2) How often do you come to Hitchin?

Less than once a week= 26 2-3 times a week= 9 4 or more times a week= 5

3) How did you get to Hitchin?

Car= 16 Bus= 11 Walking= 9 Other= 4

4) Why do you come to Hitchin?

Easy place to get to= 29 Wide range of shops= 6 Nice place to shop= 5

5) What type of goods do you usually buy?

Convenience goods= 36 Comparison Goods= 4

6) How far have you travelled to get here?

Less than a mile= 20 2-3 miles= 14 4+ miles= 6

**7) Bluewater= 3 Lakeside= 9 Harlequin= 21
Brent Cross= 7**

8) Do you recommend Hitchin as a good place to shop?

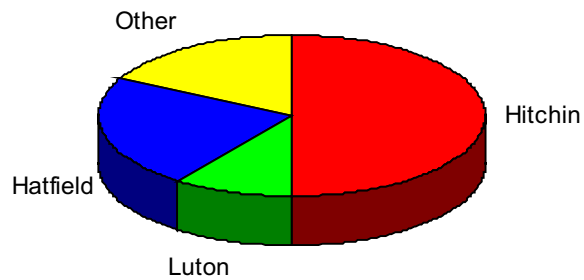
Yes= 24 No= 16

9) On a scale of one to ten where would you put Hitchin?

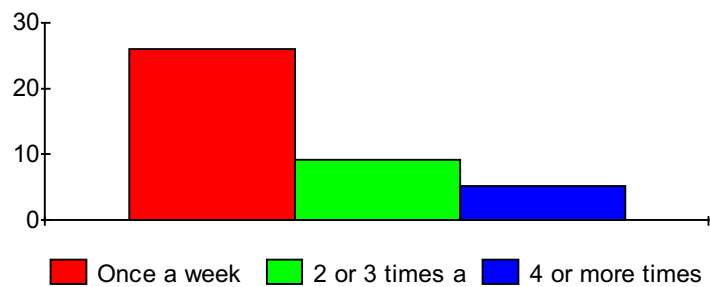
**1) 0 2) 3 3) 6 4) 0 5) 9 6) 5
7) 8 8) 3 9) 5 10) 1**

Graphs For Hitchin Questions

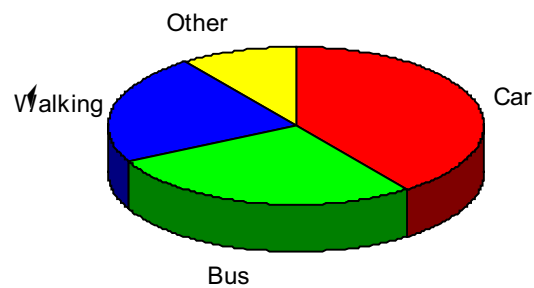
Where Do You Live?



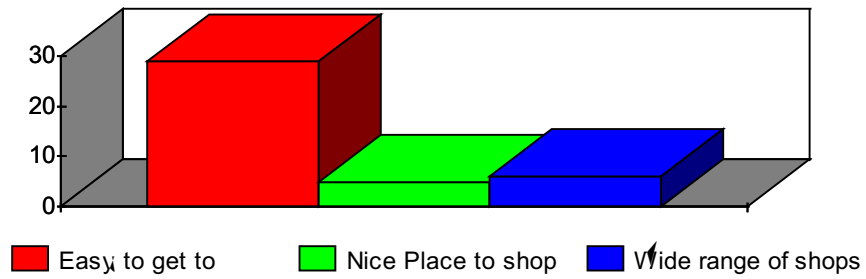
How often do you come to Hitchin?



How do you get to Hitchin?

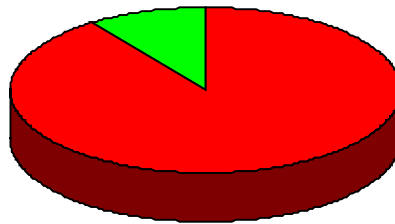


Why do you come to Hitchin?



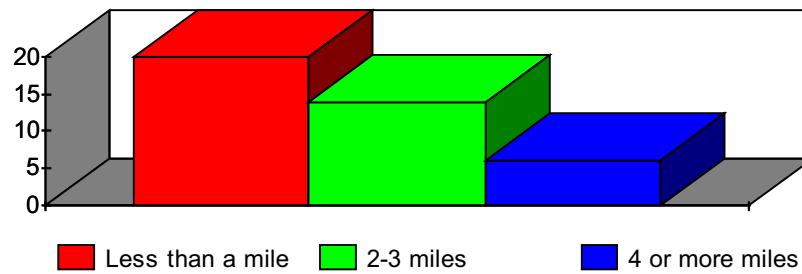
What type of goods do you usually buy?

Comparison goods

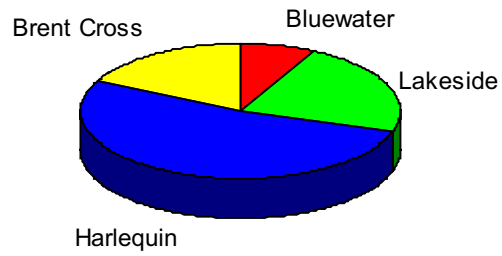


Convenience goods

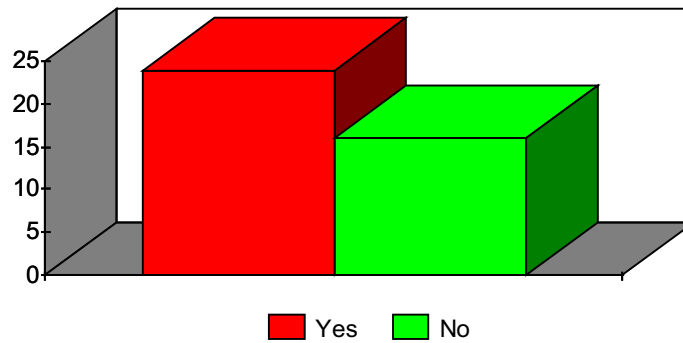
How far have you travelled?



Which other major shopping centres do you use?



Do you recommend Hitchin as a good place to shop?



Shops In Hitchin

We worked in groups of four to fill in the land use map. We split into pairs and one pair did the bottom half of Hitchin and the other pair did the top half. We numbered each part of the Key and put a number in each shop accordingly e.g. where all the banks were, we labelled them as number one on the map as it was number one on the key.

We then coloured in the map when we got back to school, after I counted up all the shops in every category on the Key, I plotted these results on to a bar graph. I created the bar graph by using Microsoft Excel. This showed me the types of shops Hitchin had a lot of and the types of shops Hitchin had the least of.

Analysis Of Shops In Hitchin

My bar graph shows that there were 38 clothes shops and 31 restaurants, pubs or cafes. These were the highest two types of shops that were found in Hitchin, apart from “other” shops which was 42. I was surprised by the amount of banks and building societies in Hitchin, there were 9 of them.

Looking back at the results of the Questionnaire I noticed that thirty -six of the people that were surveyed said that they mainly buy Convenience goods from Hitchin. This drew me to a conclusion that Hitchin had more food and drink, and clothes shops than any other types of shops because clothes, food and drinks are convenience goods that are required by everyone to survive, so they will never fall in demand.

Analysis Of Pedestrian Count.

The pedestrian density Isoline map shows me that as you go towards the middle of Hitchin, the pedestrian density increases and the scatter chart shows that there is a weak, negative correlation when you plot the pedestrian density against the distance away from the town centre (town centre shown as a star on the pedestrian count map).

The scatter chart shows that as you get further away from the centre of Hitchin, the pedestrian density decreases. This is shown on the graph because when the distance away from the centre was 280m; there were thirty people and when the distance away from the centre was 25m; there were one hundred and ninety people. This backs up my findings from the Isoline map that the centre of Hitchin is the busiest part. It also shows that most of the main shops are located in the centre of Hitchin, as it is the most accessible part of the town centre.

Sphere Of Influence Analysis

Twenty of the people that were surveyed lived in Hitchin itself but many people came from as far as Hatfield, which is around twenty kilometres away and Luton, which is around ten kilometres away. This meant that the sphere of influence for Hitchin was fairly large as people from other towns came to shop at Hitchin.

I was very surprised that people came all the way from Luton to shop at Hitchin because Luton has an indoor shopping complex, which is fairly large. I assumed that it might be because Hitchin is known for having Markets fairly frequently. I decided to phone relatives in Luton to find out if they had a large market selling cheap goods and was told that it didn't. This shows me that people in Luton come to Hitchin town centre because of its Market.

From this I can draw a conclusion that Hitchin has a fairly large sphere of influence because people from other towns come to shop at the Market Hitchin has.

Evaluation Of Hitchin

While I was walking around in Hitchin I was taking into account the following five things:

SIZE- I thought that Hitchin was a fairly large shopping centre as it took quite a while to walk round and see all the parts of it.

CLEANLINESS- Hitchin looked very clean as there was not much litter on the floor. I thought that this might be because there were four or five council workers cleaning and picking up litter using special machines.

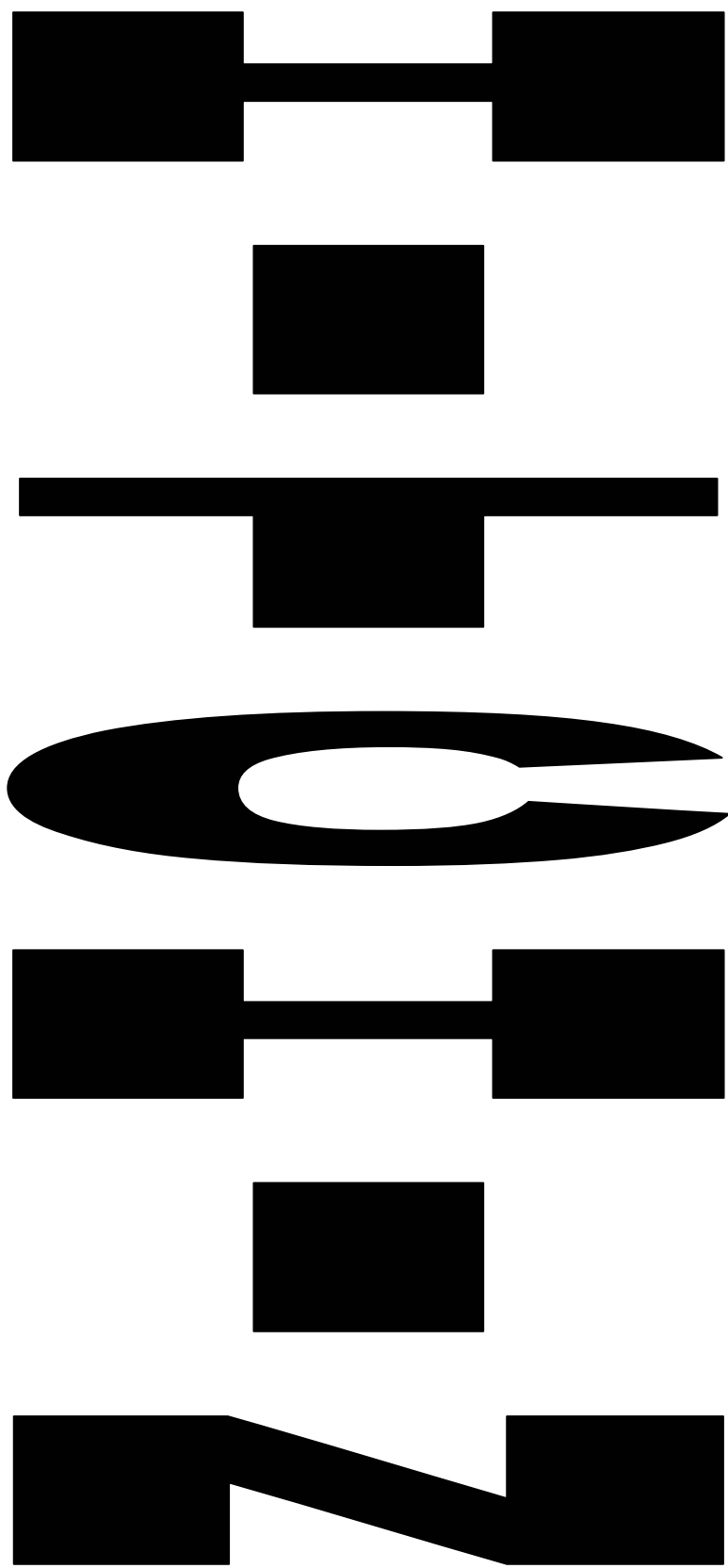
RANGE OF SHOPS- I was disappointed by the range of shops as most of them were clothes shops or shops that sold food and drink.

PARKING FACILITIES- the parking facilities were good as there were a few car parks and cars could also be parked on nearby side streets.

TRANSPORT LINKS- the transport links are poor in Hitchin, although there are main roads, the public transport was very poor and infrequent.

(BIOPOLAR SCALE)

	2	1	0	-1	-2
SIZE		●			
CLEANLINESS	●				
RANGE OF SHOPS			●		
PARKING FACILITIES		●			
TRANSPORT LINKS				●	



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Palmers Green Questionnaire

1) Where do you live?

Palmers Green= 22 Southgate= 9 Wood Green= 2
Winchmore Hill= 4 Other= 3

2) How often do you shop in Palmers Green?

Less than once a week= 11 2-3 times a week= 15
4 or more times a week= 14

3) How do you get to Palmers Green?

Car= 9 Bus= 8 Walking= 19 Other= 4

4) Why do you come to Palmers Green?

Easy to get to= 19 Range of shops= 10 Nice place= 11

5) What type of goods do you buy?

Convenience goods = 28 Comparison goods = 12

6) How far have you travelled to get here?

Less than a mile= 30 2-3 miles= 9 4+ miles= 1

7) What other main shopping centre do you go to?

Bluewater= 2 Lakeside= 3 Harlequin= 7 Brent Cross= 28

8) Do you recommend Palmers Green as a good place to shop?

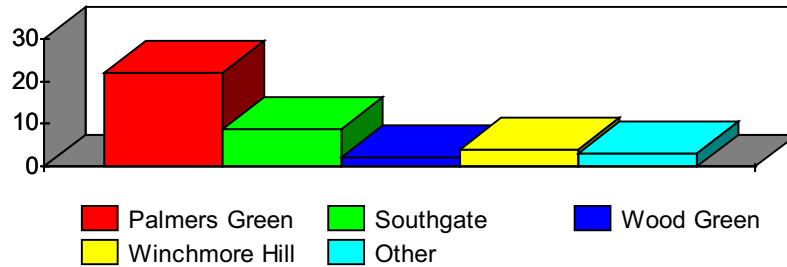
Yes= 32 No= 8

9) On a scale of one to ten where would you put Palmer s Green?

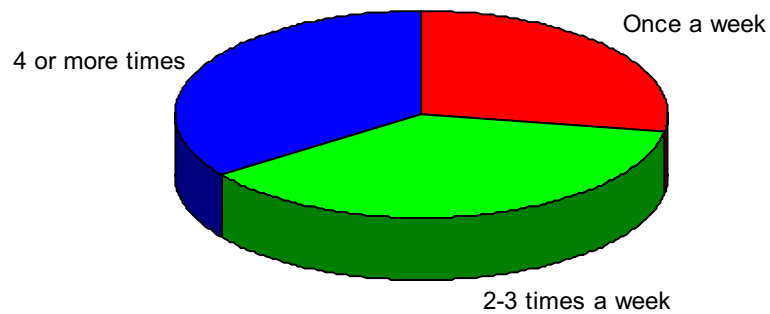
1) 0 2) 6 3) 0 4) 2 5) 2 6) 7 7) 10 8) 6 9) 3 10) 4

Graphs For Palmers Green Questions

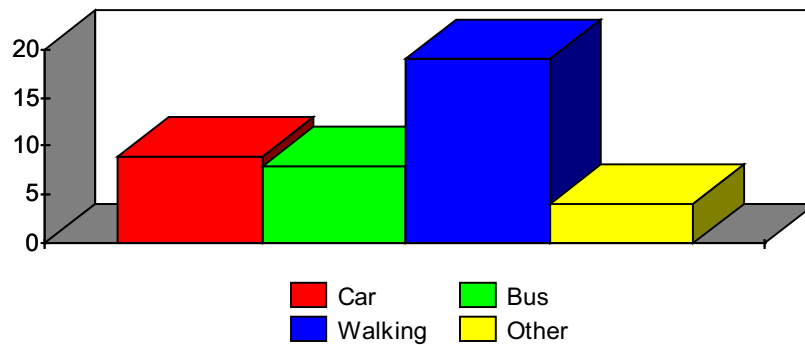
Where do you live?



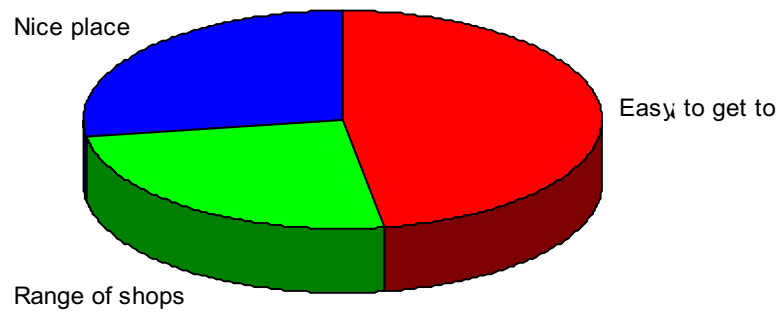
Where do you live?



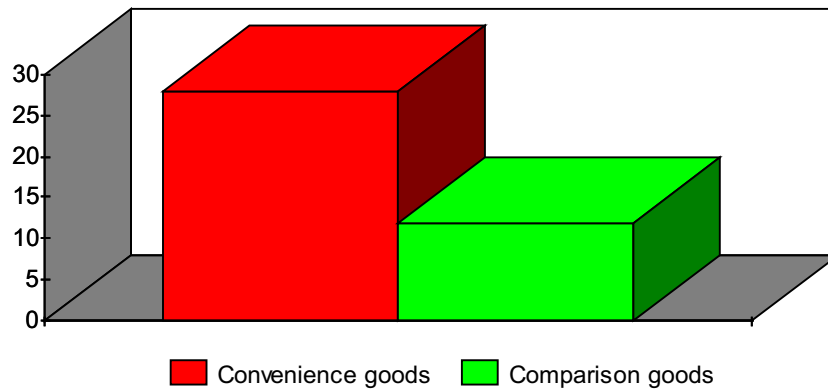
How did you get to Palmers Green?



Why do you come to Palmers Green?



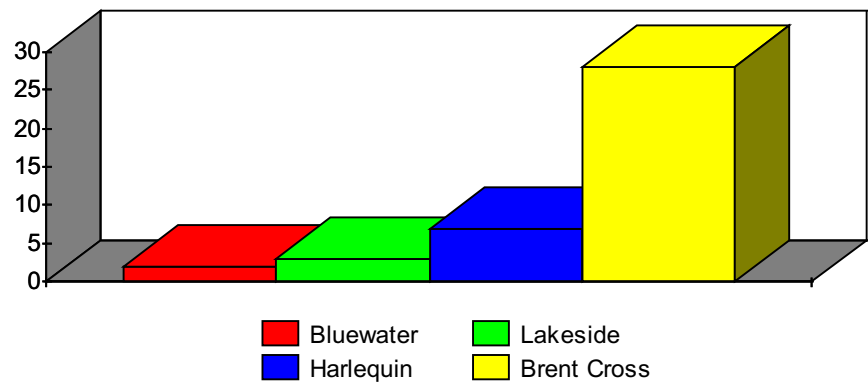
What type of goods do you usually buy?



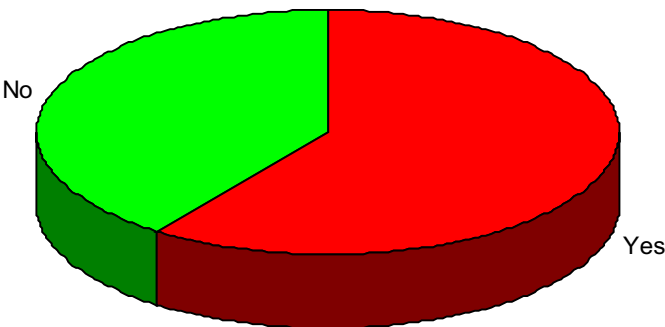
How far have you travelled?



Which major shopping centre do you go to?



Do you recommend Palmers Green as a good place to shop?



Shops In Palmers Green

To investigate the types of shops in Palmers Green I required a land use map of Palmers Green. I visited the Palmers Green library and they provided me with a copy of the land use map, I could not do a nearest neighbour analysis for Palmers Green as the map was not to scale.

The Palmers Green land use map was not as difficult to fill in as the Hitchin map as it had all the names of the shops written on it. I still had to walk up and down Palmers Green and fill in the map using numbers, as I did not recognise many of the shop names.

When I got home I coloured in the second copy of the land use using the same key as the Hitchin map, so that it would be easier to see the differences between the two town centres. I then counted up the number of shops in all the categories (12 categories in total.)

Analysis Of Shops In Palmers Green

The bar chart shows that there were 19 restaurants in Palmers Green. This was a lot higher than any other shops as the next highest was clothes, which was only 15, the next highest was banks and building societies with 11 stores.

Three or four of these restaurants were big banqueting suites and there were also seven or eight fast food franchises. This shows that even though there were a lot of restaurants, they targeted a whole range of people.

I was surprised to see that there were only nine food and drinks shops. I thought this was because there was a Tesco, Sainsbury and Iceland in Palmers Green, which are big supermarket companies. These three supermarkets would sell cheaper goods than a smaller food and drink shop, which means that the smaller shops would not be able to compete with the larger supermarkets. There were only two shoe shops in Palmers Green

Sphere Of Influence Analysis

I worked out the sphere of influence of Palmers Green by asking in my questionnaire, where people lived.

Twenty-two of the people that were surveyed came from Palmers Green but people also came from Wood Green, Edmonton, Southgate and Winchmore Hill, which were only 4 or 5 miles away.

Some shopping centres such as Wood Green and Brent Cross had indoor complexes, which means that people would find that it is easier to shop there rather than Palmers Green because there are a whole range of shops under one roof and they would not have to worry about getting wet when it rains as they are indoors.

Shopping Centre

Evaluation

While I was walking around in Palmers Green I was taking into account the following five things:

SIZE- I thought that Palmers Green shopping centre was about average size, it was slightly smaller than Hitchin's was.

CLEANLINESS- I thought that Palmers Green was not very clean as there was a lot of litter on the floors. This surprised me because there were a lot of bins in Palmers Green. When I was doing my questionnaire a few people said that the rubbish was left by school children from the local schools.

RANGE OF SHOPS- I wasn't pleased with the range of shops in Palmers Green, as there were mainly restaurants or fast food joints I also felt that Palmers Green had too many banks for such a small area.

PARKING FACILITIES- the parking facilities were below average in Palmers Green,

TRANSPORT LINKS- the transport links were good as there were lots of buses running and the A406 was fairly close by.

	2	1	0	-1	-2
SIZE			●		
CLEANLINESS				●	
RANGE OF SHOPS					●
PARKING FACILITIES				●	
TRANSPORT LINKS	●				

Comparing Both Shopping Centres

THE SHOPS

Hitchin had a fairly wide range of shops as the bar graph of the types of shops in Hitchin was fairly even. Palmers Green did not have a wide range of shops as the bar for restaurants on its bar graph, towered above the rest of them. Hitchin was also the larger shopping centre of the two, which meant that it had more shops than Palmers Green.

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Hitchin had the larger sphere of influence because its market attracted people from as far as Hatfield and Luton. Palmers Green had the smaller sphere of influence because there were a few shopping centres that were larger and better to shop at nearby such as Enfield Town and Wood Green.

CONCLUSION

I thought that Hitchin was the better shopping centre mainly because it was larger than Palmers Green and had a wider range of shops than Palmers Green. On top of that, Hitchin was also a clean shopping centre that had good parking facilities and a good transport links. My questionnaires do not back this up as the modal mark out of ten for Hitchin was 5 and for Palmers Green was 7. This may be because different people were surveyed for each questionnaire.

The Palmers Green shopping centre can be improved by having better parking facilities as local supermarkets provided the parking facilities.

Evaluation

From this project I have found out that shopping centres are very different from one another. I found it extremely difficult to produce the land use maps as it took a long time to find out where every shop was allocated on the map, especially on the Hitchin land use map as it did not have the names of the shops written down on it like the Palmers Green land use map. I also found it very difficult to ask people the questions from the questionnaire as a lot of the people were not interested in answering the questions.

If I could do this project again I would try to do a nearest neighbour analysis for both shopping centres.

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Geography Coursework

Comparing Shopping Centres-

Hitchin and Palmers Green

By Raj Popat

