Aim
To compare the main shopping districts of Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth.

Introduction
I chose to study the village of Chalfont St Giles and the nearby town of Rickmansworth, because I live in Chalfont St Giles, and Rickmansworth is very near to me and I could get to and from there whenever necessary. Also I thought that these two locations would give me a wide variety when it came to studying my results.

Chalfont St Giles is a small village in Buckinghamshire, near the conurbation of London in the South - East England. It is easily accessibility with Chalfont and Latimer train station a five-minute drive away, in Little Chalfont and buses going to and from some of the nearby shopping centres.

Rickmansworth, only 15 miles away from Chalfont St Giles is in Hertfordshire. It is more accessible than Chalfont St Giles with regular bus routes and its own train station near to the centre. To compare the two places there were some factors, which I thought would be useful to investigate, these are shown below. I decided these would be helpful because I wanted to study people's opinions as well as my opinion. Also the amount of people visiting the area by foot or passing through by car. These are all useful comparisons for me to make.

How Is the Land Used In Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth?
The land use is how the town or village uses the space to build services for the surrounding area. This is why people always need to apply for planning permission because a small village will not need or want a large supermarket, and they need to carefully consider what the people of the town will want and will raise the local economy. The land use is divided into seven categories. Comparison shops, convenience shops, specialist shops, services, entertainment establishments, offices and dwellings.

What Are People's Shopping Habits In Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth?
Shops can be placed into a hierarchy based on the services they provide. At the bottom of the hierarchy are small shops selling low order, convenience goods (e.g.

bread and milk). At the top are the shops selling high order goods (e.g. furniture and electrical goods). The CBD or Central Business District is the commercial centre. It contains the main shops, offices and financial institutions of the urban area. It is usually the most accessible (easy to get to) part of the city. This is because most of the main transport routes lead here. Due to high land values, buildings tend to be tall and building density is high. It used to be that the CBD was at one point around the 60s and 70s at the top of the shopping hierarchy, but more recently some things have changed this so now superstores are at the top. Some factors contribute to this:

• Due to increased mobility (the result of increased car ownership) people can travel further to shops, visit shops with a wider range and volume of stock and buy in bulk.

• The number of corner shops has reduced. This is the result of greater mobility, the limited and often expensive range of goods available and due to more people being paid monthly they buy in bulk from supermarkets.

• In some areas CBDs have declined due to competition with regional shopping centres.

The sample questionnaire is Figure C.

What Is the Environmental Quality Like In Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth?

The environmental quality depends on many factors to do with the town or village. It depends on things such as smells, noise and greenery. This is completely dependent on my decision and opinion of each area. Each factor will be graded from –2 to 2, 2 being good and –2 being poor. The scores will then be totalled up and each site will have an overall score. The environmental quality chart is shown in Figure C.

What Is the Traffic Flow Like In both Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth?

The traffic flow is how many cars go past the site in a certain amount of time. This is recorded by counting and recording each vehicle onto a tally chart as shown in Figure D1.

What Is the Pedestrian Flow in Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth Like?

The pedestrian count is how many people walk past the point where you are standing. This is also counted and recorded into a tally chart shown in Figure D2.

What Are the Spheres of Influence of Chalfont St Giles and Rickmansworth?

The sphere of influence is the area around a settlement within which people use that settlement for their services. This depends on the size and functions of a town, the transport facilities available and how much competition there is from nearby settlements. Two things contribute to this, a threshold population, the minimum number of people needed so a certain service can survive, and also the range, which is the maximum distance people are prepared to get a service. In my investigation I shall find out the sphere of influence by asking people to answer a question about where they have come from, this should show me how far the people have travelled and combined with the land use, I can work out the range. I can compare how popular the two towns are and how big their spheres of influences are, thus finding out which has the shops which people are willing to travel further for. The questionnaire is shown in Figure B, the sphere of influence question is number 8.

Method

During the summer holidays, I spent two days in the town of Rickmansworth, then, for the following two days; I studied Chalfont St Giles. I previously printed off the boxes and questionnaires, which would be required for each part of my investigation. The questionnaires are for the shopping habits of the people shopping there; the environmental quality surveys so I could mark down the environmental qualities of each site. Traffic counts and pedestrian counts, so when I counted the number of cars and pedestrians, I could mark it straight down onto the boxes. I chose six points in Rickmansworth:

Point A: Outside Iceland
Point B: by Thomas Cook
Point C: outside Marks and Spencer's
Point D: by Mencap
Point E: by Second Gear
Point F: outside an office block

All these points were chosen because they were spread out right across the centre of the town, thus giving me a good range of points. This was a representative amount, it was not too many, which would become hard to handle and would not help me anyway, but nor was it too little as it gave me a good spread across the whole area. At every point, some investigations were carried out so that I could gain the answers to my above questions so that I could complete the aim of my investigation with good evidence. I did a traffic count, pedestrian count, environmental quality survey and five questionnaires at every point. The traffic survey was carried out over a time period of ten minutes; I thought this was an appropriate length of time to count the cars. This also included time for things such as traffic lights, so that there was an average amount of cars for that site. I stood next to the road and counted the cars going into or out of the CBD. The vehicles were placed into one of four categories:

Car, bus/coach, bicycle or lorry/van

The results from this were recorded in a table in the form of a tally. This was quick because the cars pass very quickly and a tally was the easiest way to count as they went past because for every car, one line was drawn. Secondly, a pedestrian count was conducted, also lasting for ten minutes. This was also a good time period so that there was a good result of pedestrians, and that it gave an average of that site also. Every person entering the centre was tallied into one column, and everyone leaving was placed into another so that I could see whether more people were entering or leaving the CBD and if they were entering then it was likely that they were going to be using the shops. Next, I recorded the environmental score for the points surrounding area. There were eleven topics in total, which were graded as explained in the introduction. The boxes, which applied to the area, were ticked and the totals equalled for each column at the bottom.

All of my questionnaires were randomly sampled at my specific points. My points were also chosen randomly but so that they were also spread out over the entire area to get an average for the whole town or village. I decided that I needed twelve survey points, so I split this across my two locations. I think twelve was a good amount but not too much so that I would have too many results which would not make any difference to having a sensible amount and still getting an overall similar result. The time, day and week in which I conducted my survey were also random. I chose them when it was possible for me to carry out each part. I think this may slightly have affected my results because some things may have been conducted at lunch times, which could have affected the pedestrian counts, or in the mornings and

late afternoons there are also less people around, and they may be shopping for different things to afternoon shoppers and be of a different age group. My points in Chalfont St Giles were also spread out so that the whole village was covered. All the above investigations were then repeated at each site in Chalfont St Giles. My points in Chalfont St Giles were:

Point U: next to Alldays

Point V: next to the pub Merlin's Cave

Point W: outside the dry cleaners

Point X: outside The Feathers, a pub

Point Y: outside the butchers.

Point Z: next to the chemist

Vehicle	Entering The CBD	Leaving The CBD
Cars		
Bus/Coach		
Bicycle		
Lorry/Van		

People Entering The CBD	People Leaving The CBD