

**RESPONSE TO CHAPTERS WITHIN THE LOCAL PLAN DIRECTION OF TRAVEL
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – 18 JANUARY 2021
Uckfield Town Council**

CHAPTER 8 – TOWN CENTRES

Are there any issues or challenges we have missed?

There is a need for improvements to be made to **public transport provision** for example the upgrade to Uckfield Bus Station has been delayed as a result of new developments and utility works around the town.

We also need better coordination of public transport services - rail to bus etc.

Do you agree with the proposed policy options?

We should be providing a variety of retail space sizes for independent retailers to get a step on the ladder, but also because a number of larger retail chains are now reviewing their sales techniques – click and collect, smaller units rather than large department stores etc.

The priority should be **attracting and retaining locally based businesses**.

Do you disagree with any of the options?

No response.

Are there any other policy options we should be considering?

This policy **needs to be carefully linked with transport policy**, particularly public transport. Wealden DC need to carefully consider how we can drive shoppers to our town centres, rather than shoppers heading out of town and out of the District.

Do you have any other comments in relation to how we can plan for retail in our town and local centres?

When things are being planned for town centres, **the residents and users are the key source of information**. Towns should not all look the same nor should it be about bringing in all the big retail outlets. It is important to encourage new business into our town centres and supporting existing ones. We also know what facilities and support is required to assist our shoppers and where these facilities need to be placed.

Perhaps there could also be some freedom for Wealden DC to **reduce business rates for certain categories** of business, to encourage diversity on our High Streets.

With an increasing population there is a **need to look at public car parking**. **Councillor Standley was once quoted as saying there was no need for more parking in Uckfield. Luxfords car park was full most days pre-Covid times**. This is essential to help retain and improve town centres and retail facilities.