Warwickshire Towns Routemap: Final Report

Dr Steve Millington

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Project timeline and outcomes

May 2021	#1 Workshop: Project Launch
May 2021	#2 Workshop: Changing Ambitions
June 2021	#3 Workshop: Changing Economies
July 2021	#4 Workshop: Changing Places
Sept 2021	*Publication of mid-project report*
Sept 2021	#5 Workshop: Taking Action
Nov 2021	#6 Workshop: 4Rs High Street Regeneration Framework
Dec 2021	#7 Workshop: Vital and Viable Atherstone
Feb 2022	#8 Workshop: Vital and Viable Atherstone feedback
Mar 2022	*Publication of Vital and Viable Atherstone Report*
April 2022	*Publication of Final Report*
April 2022	#9 Workshop: Next steps

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All materials available on dedicated webpage:

www.placemanagement.org/2570

THE CANDY BAR
ROCHESTER
EST 1988
Slinders Florist
01634 846244
BRETTINGTONS
STEAK AND LOBSTER HOUSE
01634 400880

1987

Town Centre Management

1993

Planning Policy Guidance 6

1994

Vital and Viable Town Centres Report

2004

Business Improvement Districts

2006

High Street Britain 2015

2011

Town Teams

Portas Review

Understanding High Street Performance

2013

Future High Streets Forum 1

Grimsey 1

2018

Future High Streets Forum 2

Grimsey 2

Select Committee Inquiry

High Street and Towns Funds

High Streets Task Force

2020

Parliamentary Inquiry: COVID19 and the high street

Grimsey: Build Back Better

Suburban Taskforce

Welcome Back Fund!

Permitted Development Rights

Community Improvement Districts?

How should places respond?

vitality is reflected in how busy a centre is at different times and in different parts

viability refers to the ability of the centre to attract continuing investment, not just for maintenance, but also to allow improvement and adaptation to changing needs

Aldershot

Alford

Alsager

Altrincham

Atherstone

Ayr

Ballymena

Barnsley

Bidedford

Bramhall

Bristol City Centre

Bristol (St George)

Cheadle (Stockport)

Cheadle Hulme

Chorlton-cum-Hardy

Congleton

Edgeley

Gorton

Great Torrington

Harpurhey

Hazel Grove

Hertfordshire

Holmfirth

Holsworthy

Horncastle

Louth

Mablethorpe

Macclesfield

Market Rasen

Marple

Morley

Newquay

Northenden

Reddish

Romiley

Salisbury

Salford (5 district centres)

Shrewsbury

Spilsby

Sleaford

Victoria State Government

Watford

Withington

Wrexham

Underpinning academic research

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Town Types and Footfall Signatures

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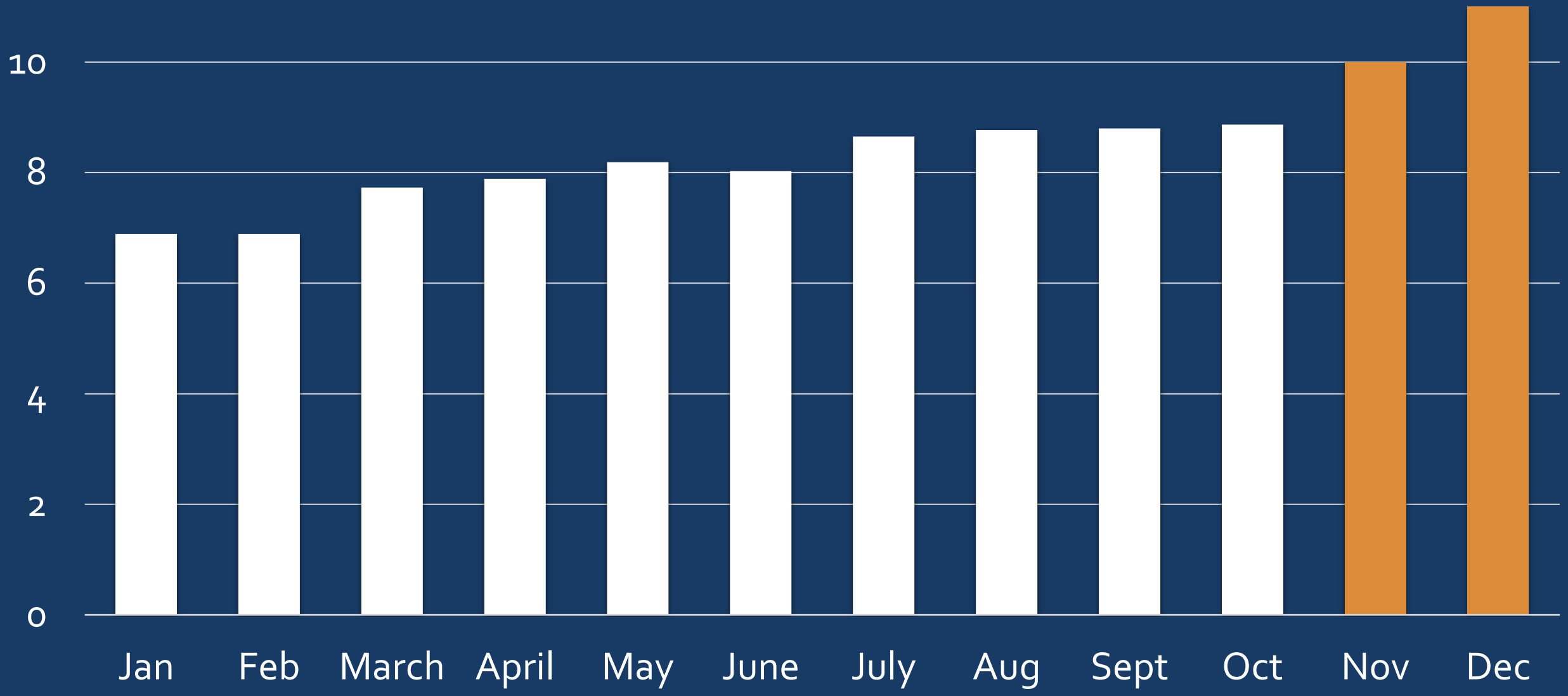
Innovate UK

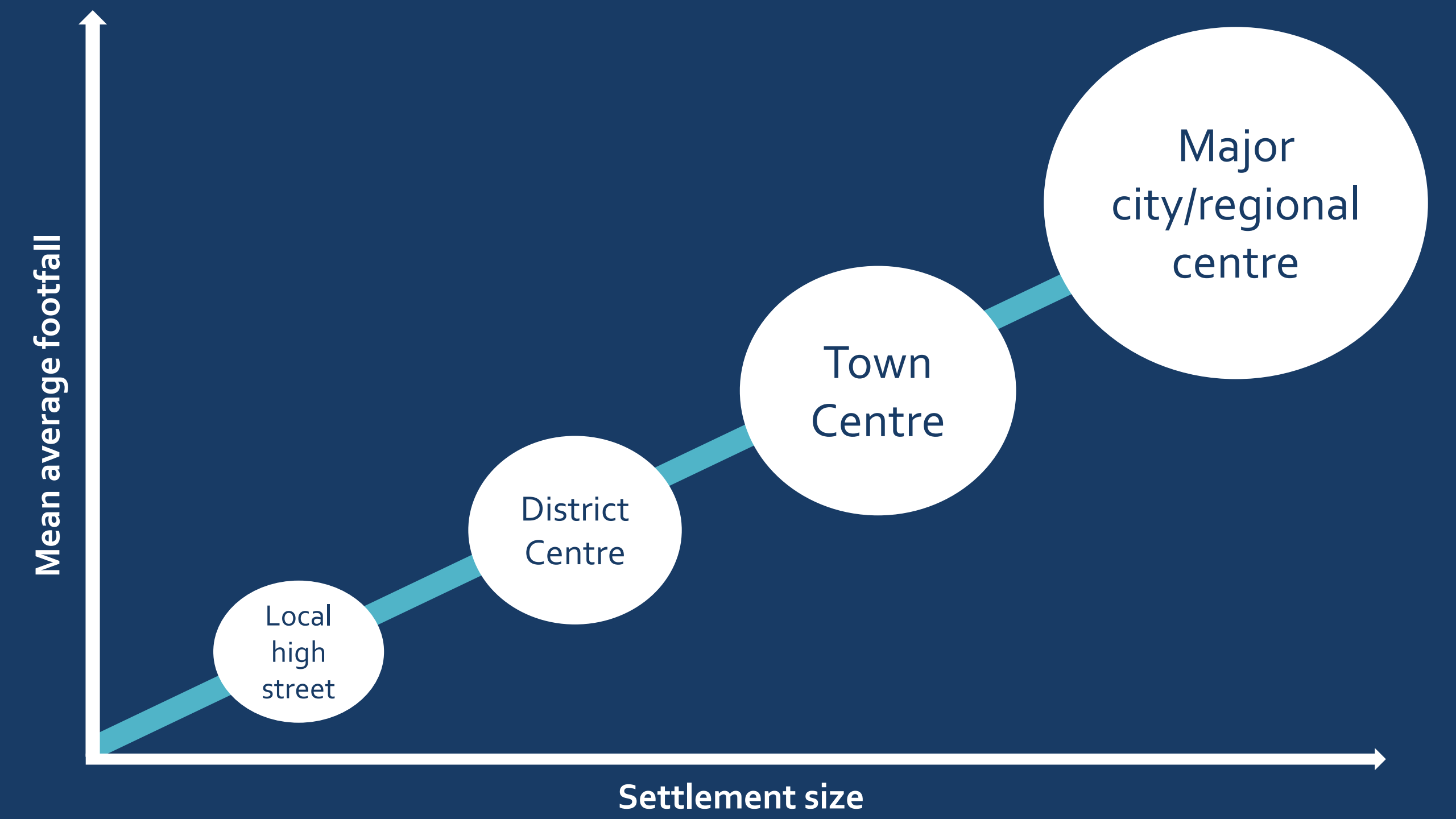
SPRINGBOARD.

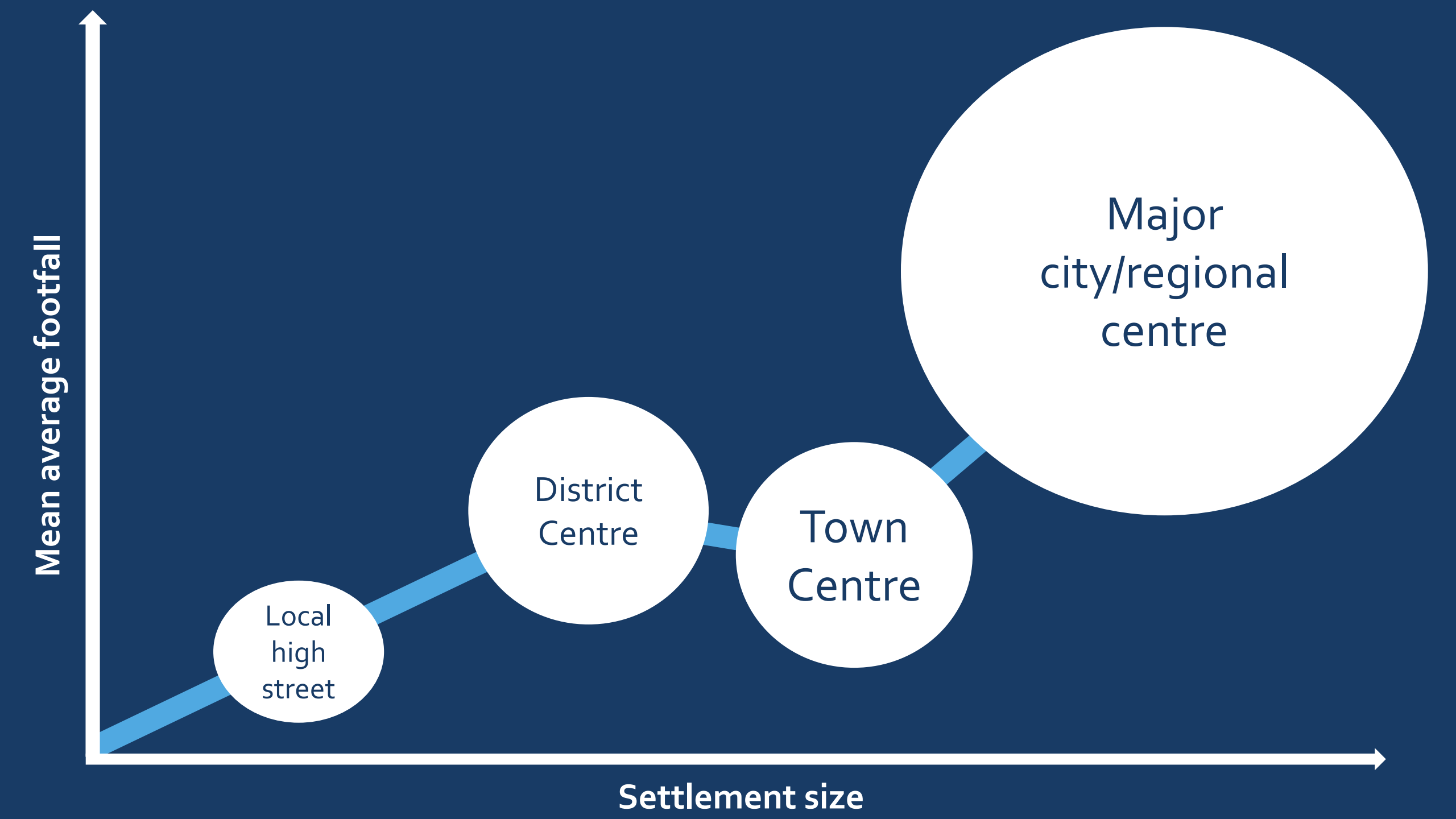
Bringing Big Data to Small Users

#BDSU

Footfall: the perceived wisdom




Mean average footfall
Settlement size
Local high street
District Centre
Town Centre
Major city/regional centre

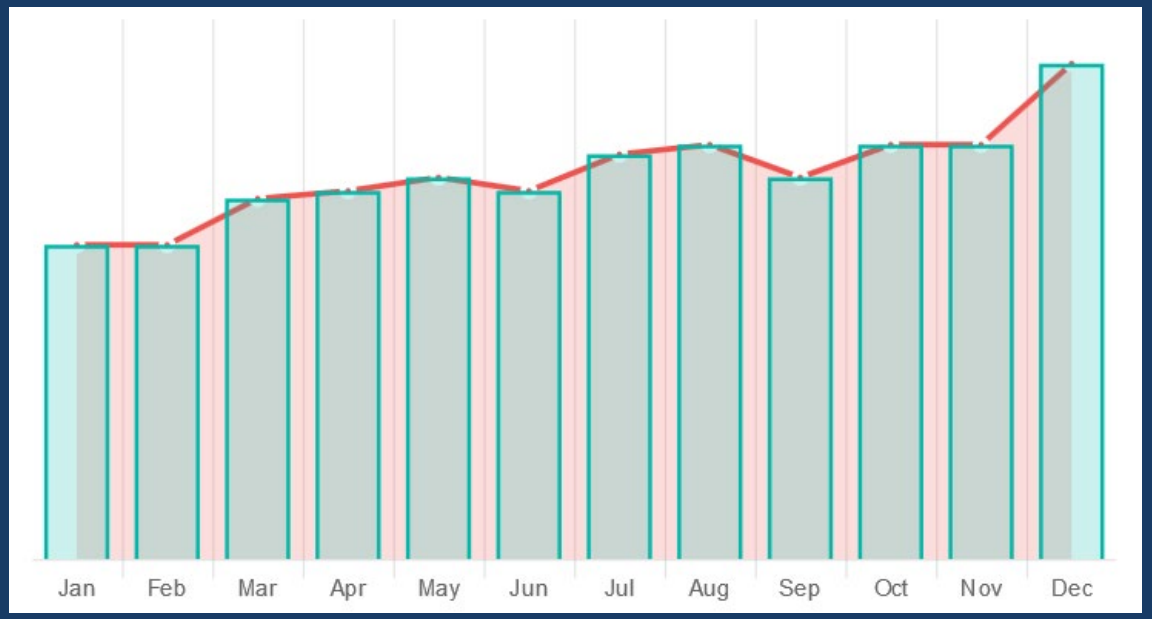

Mean average footfall
Settlement size
Local high street
District Centre
Town Centre
Major city/regional centre

There are towns in this country that may never see retail occupiers coming back into their high street again.

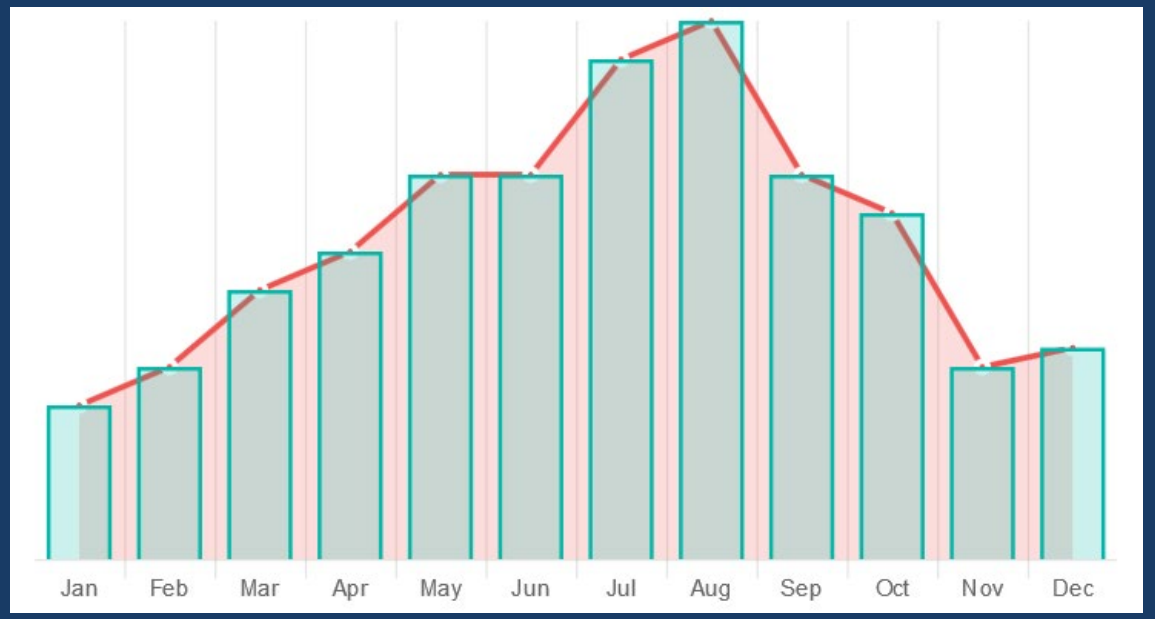
Robert Noel, Land Securities 2013

And are all centres the same?

Comparison signature



Holiday signature



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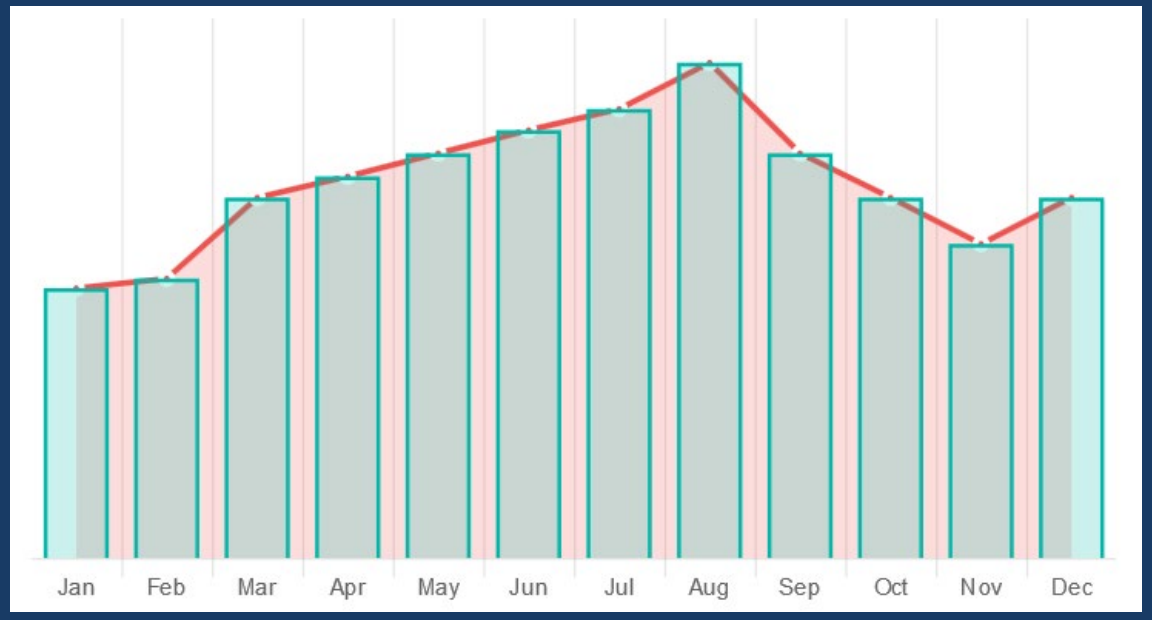
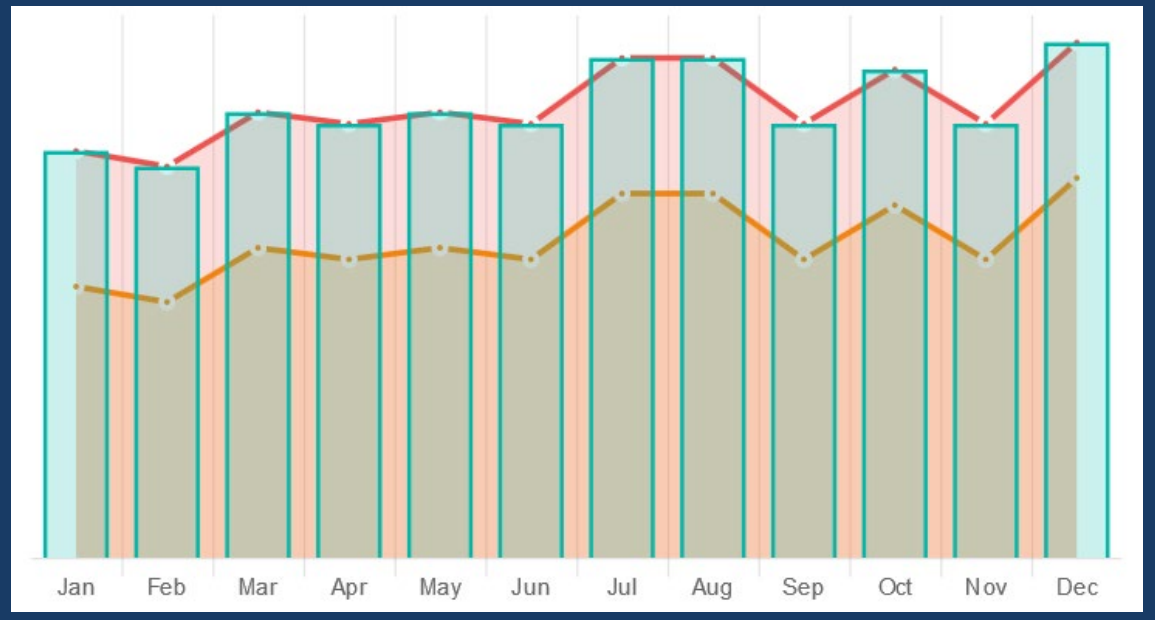


Multifunctional signature



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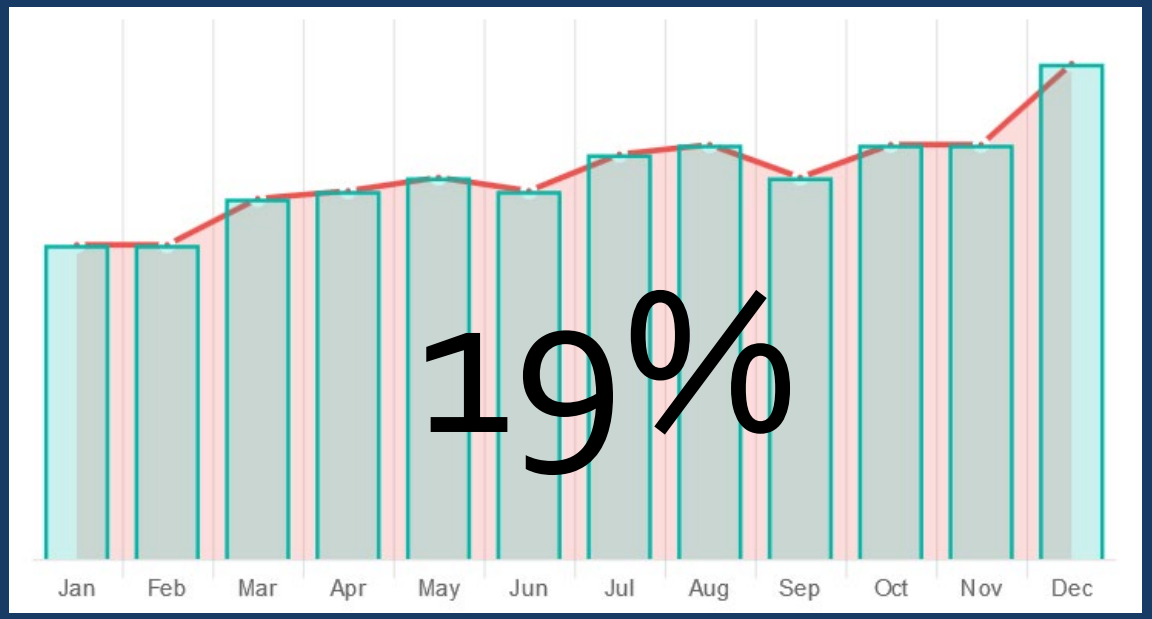

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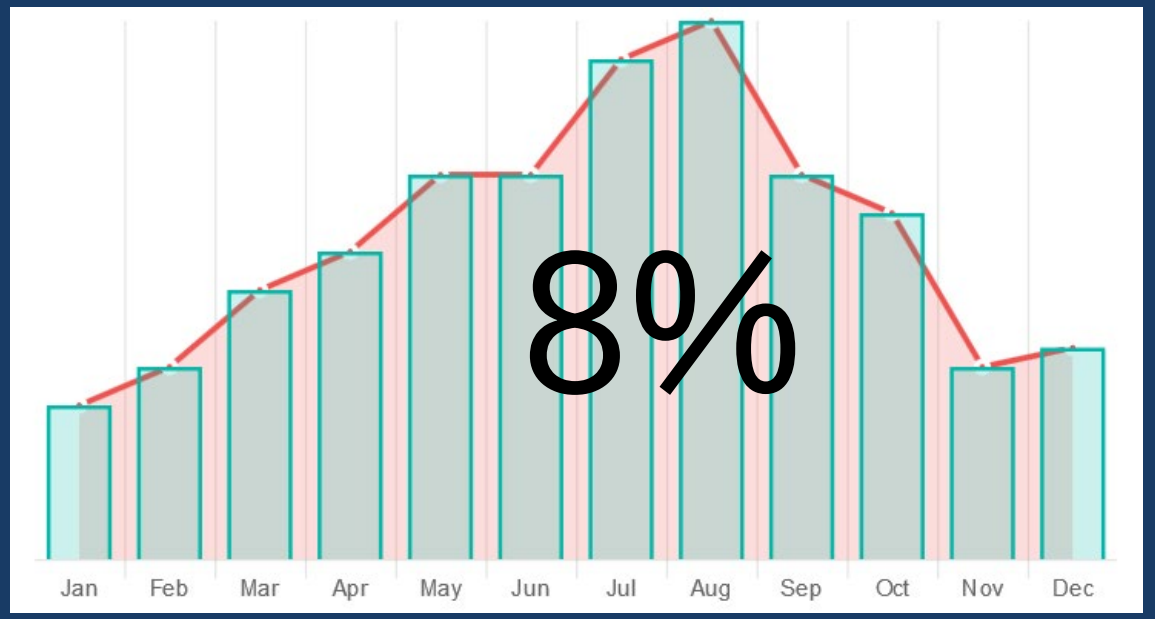

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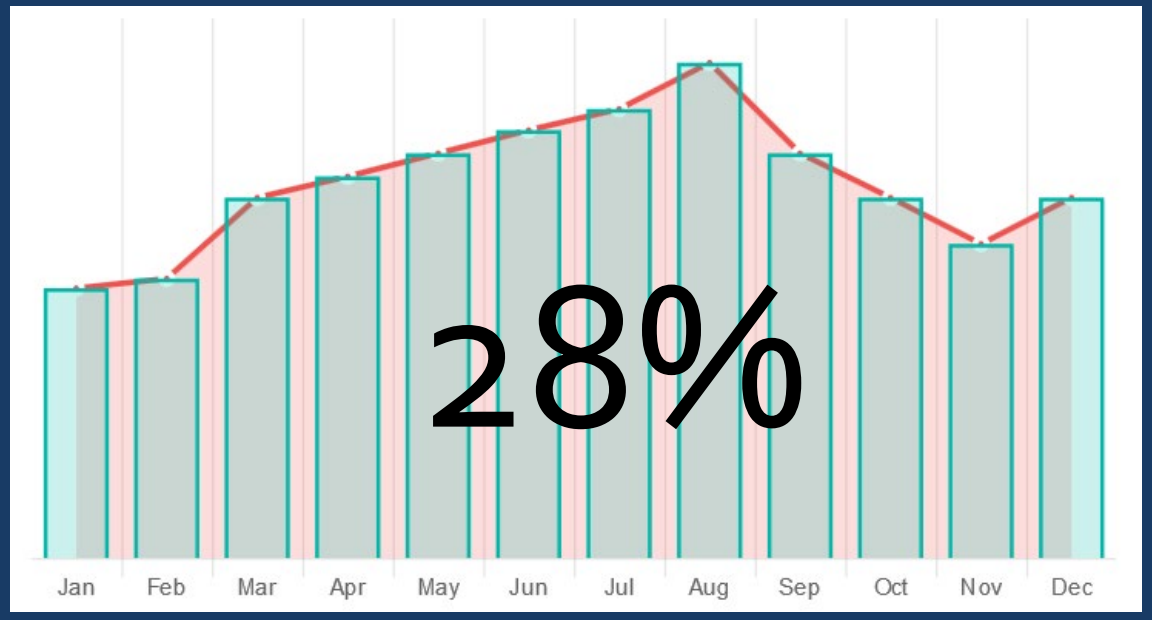

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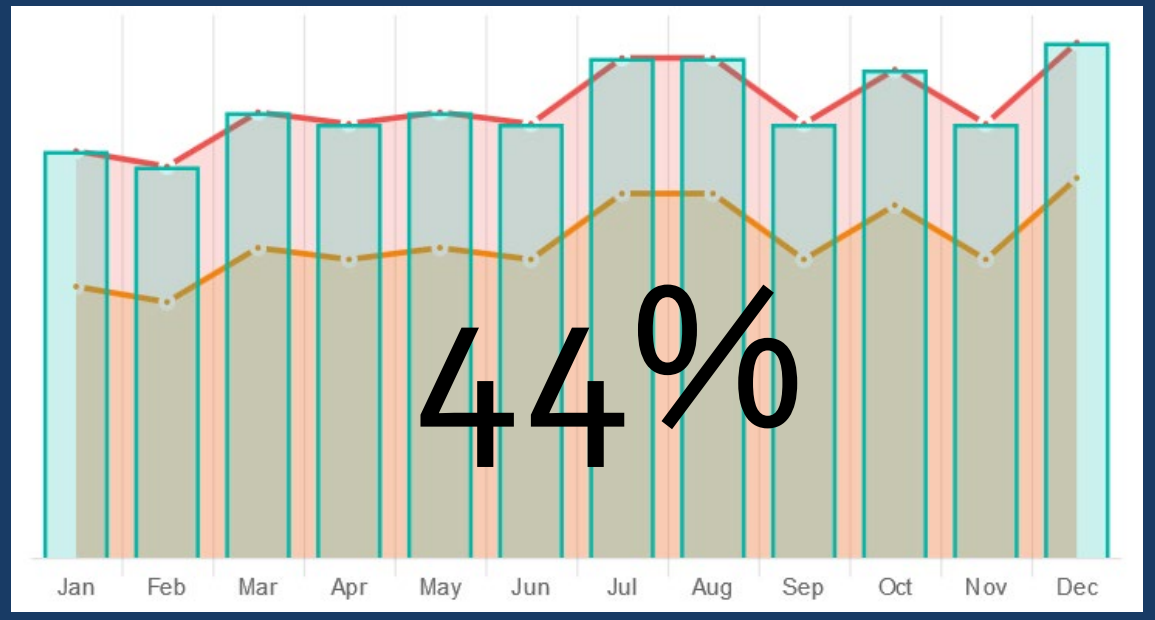

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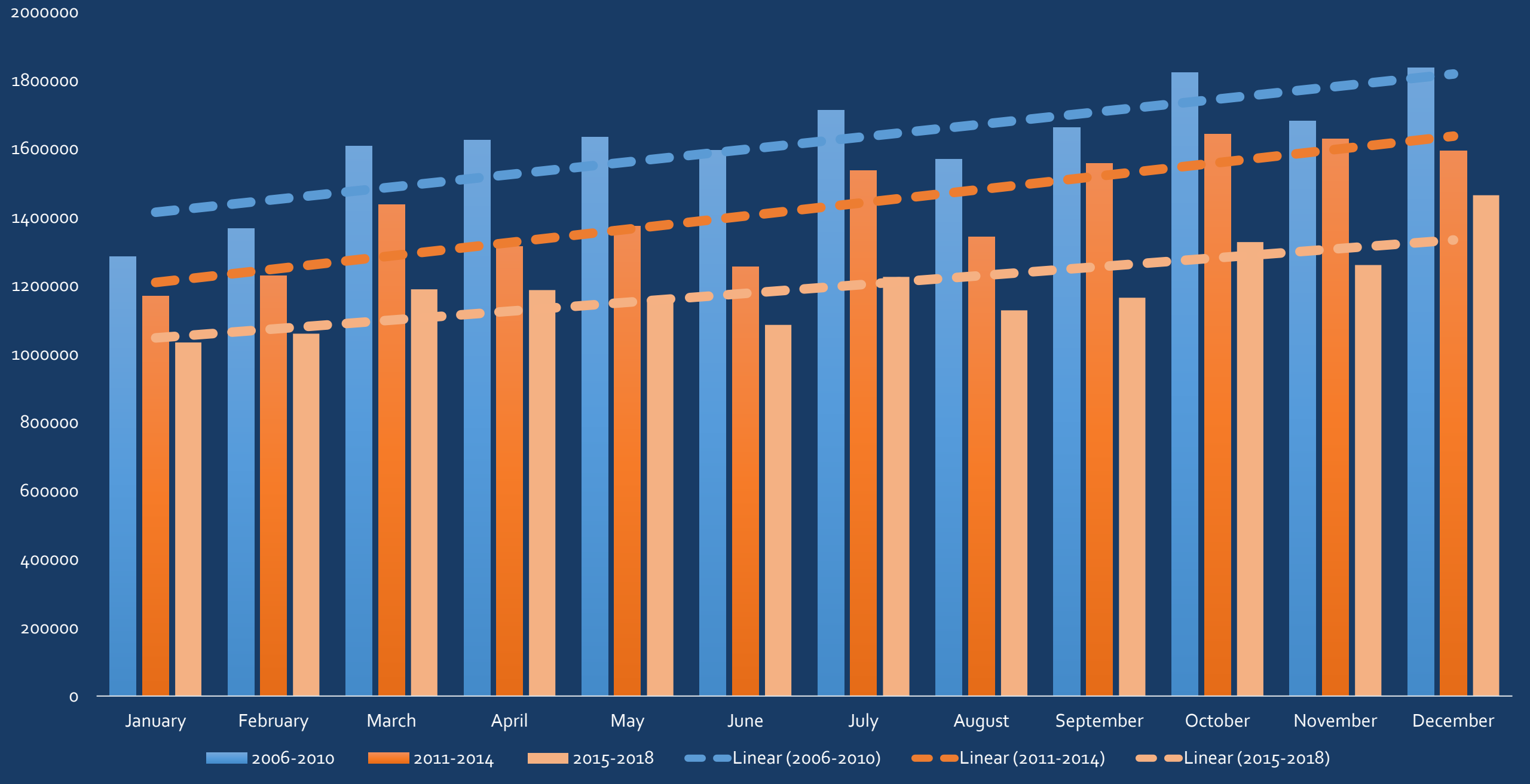
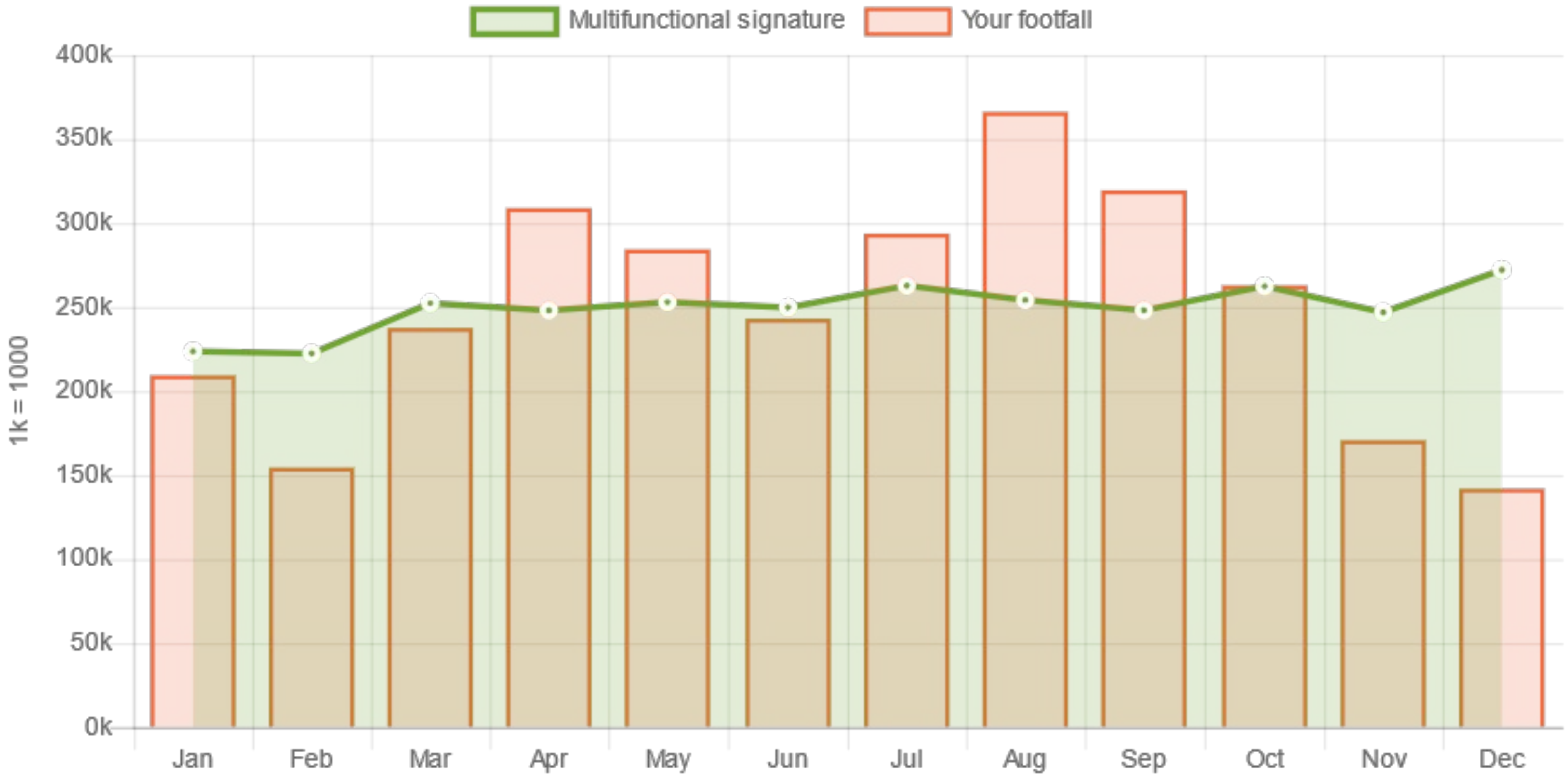
Mismatches between town centre action plans and how places are actually used

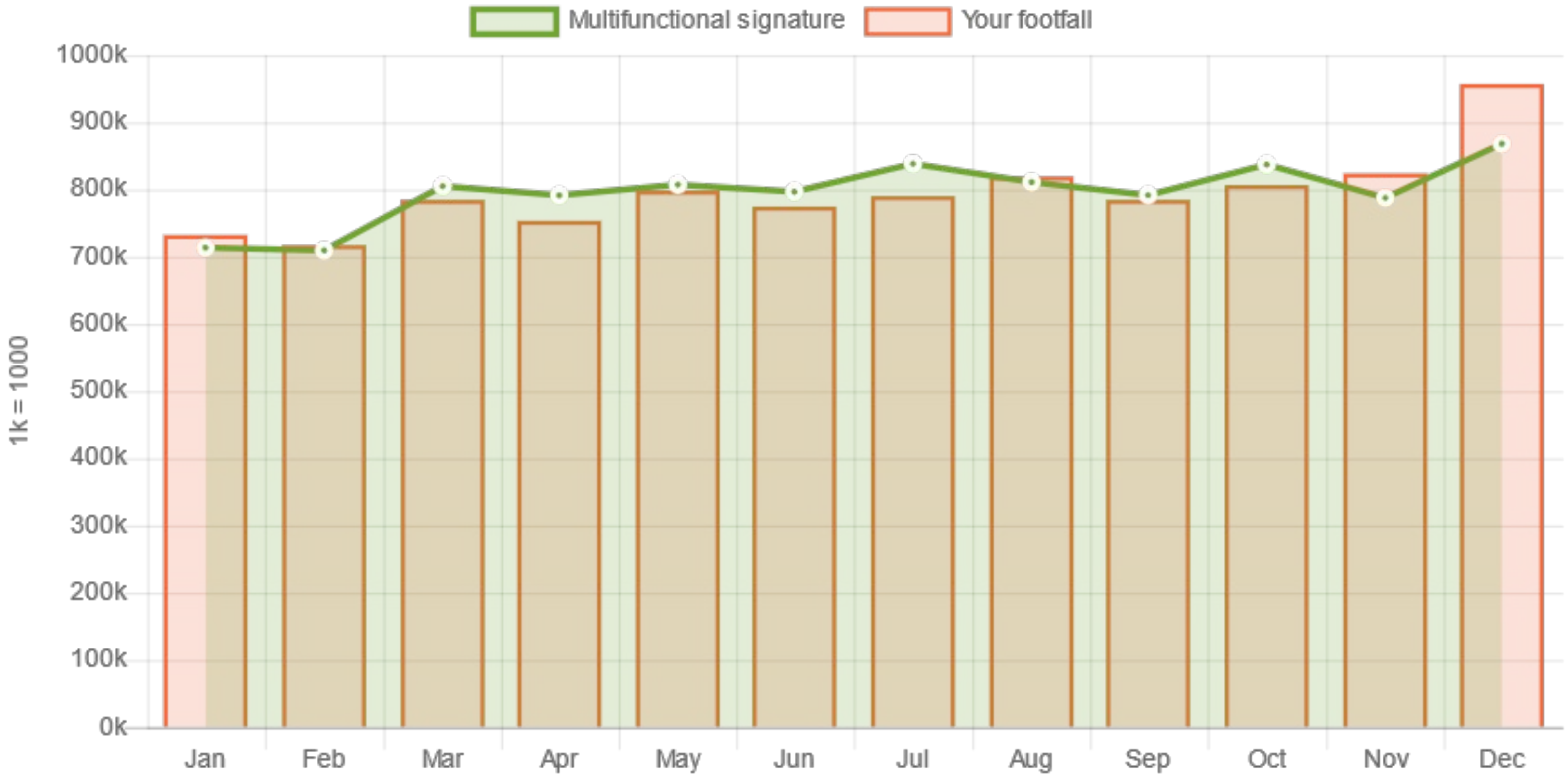
Average Monthly Footfall (2006-2010, 2011-2014, 2015-2018)



We imagine most Warwickshire are multifunctional … HOWEVER … we only have data for Kenilworth, Leamington Spa, Rugby, Stratford upon Avon, and Warwick



STRATFORD-UPON-AVON 2020



LEAMINGTON SPA 2020

25 Priority Interventions for High Streets

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E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

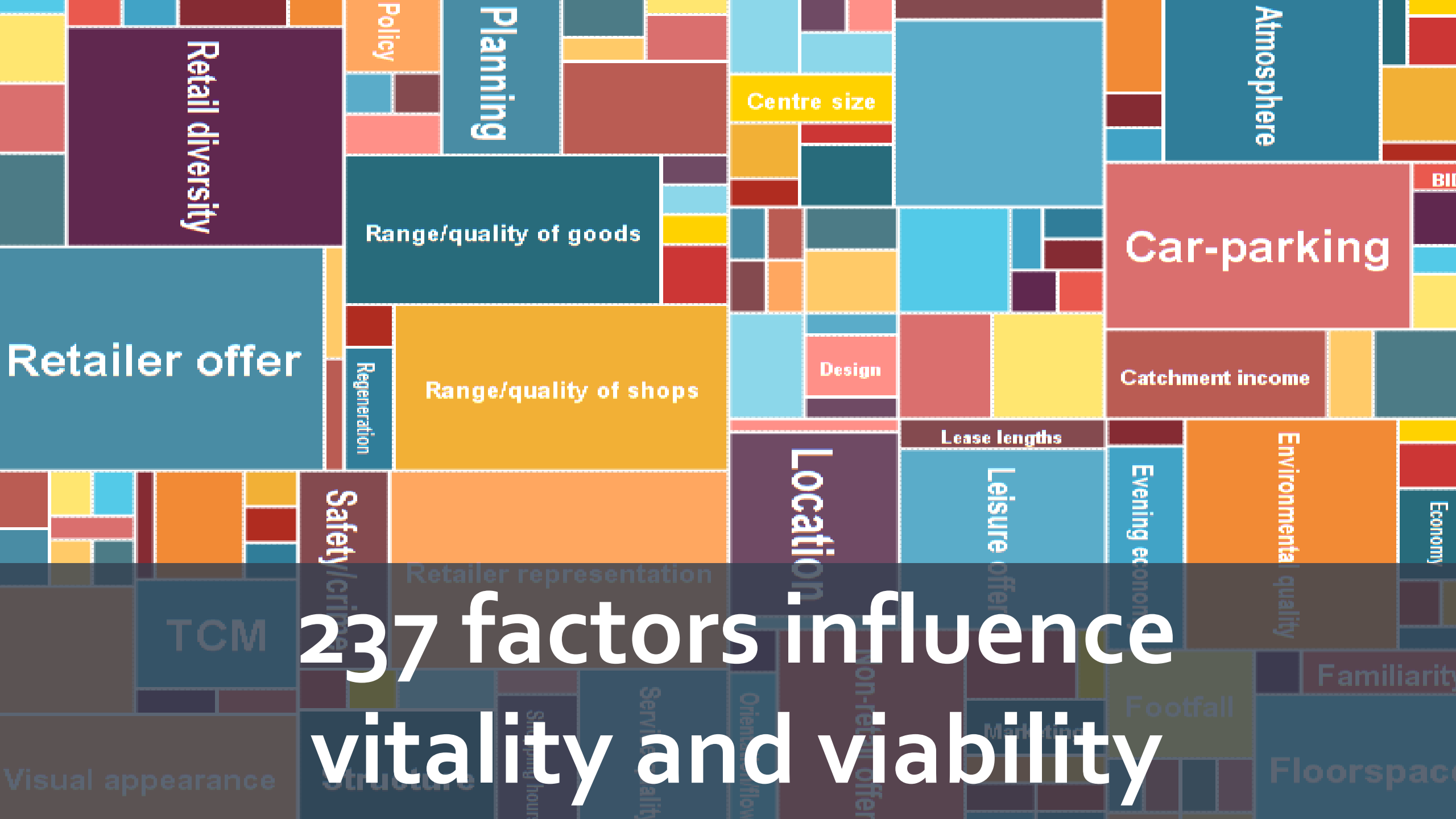
SPRINGBOARD.

High Street UK2020

#HSUK2020

vitality is reflected in how busy a centre is at different times and in different parts

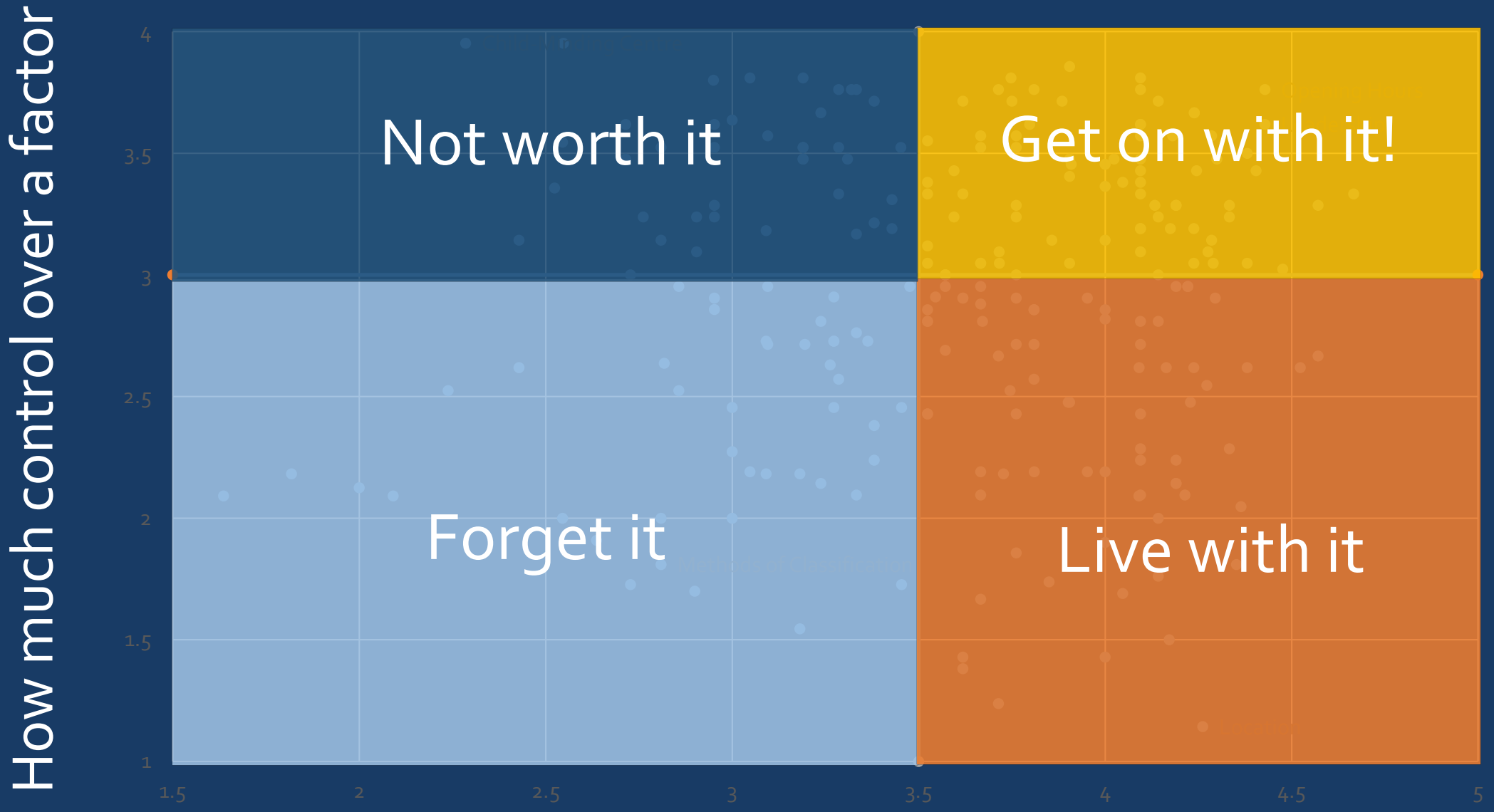
viability refers to the ability of the centre to attract continuing investment, not just for maintenance, but also to allow improvement and adaptation to changing needs

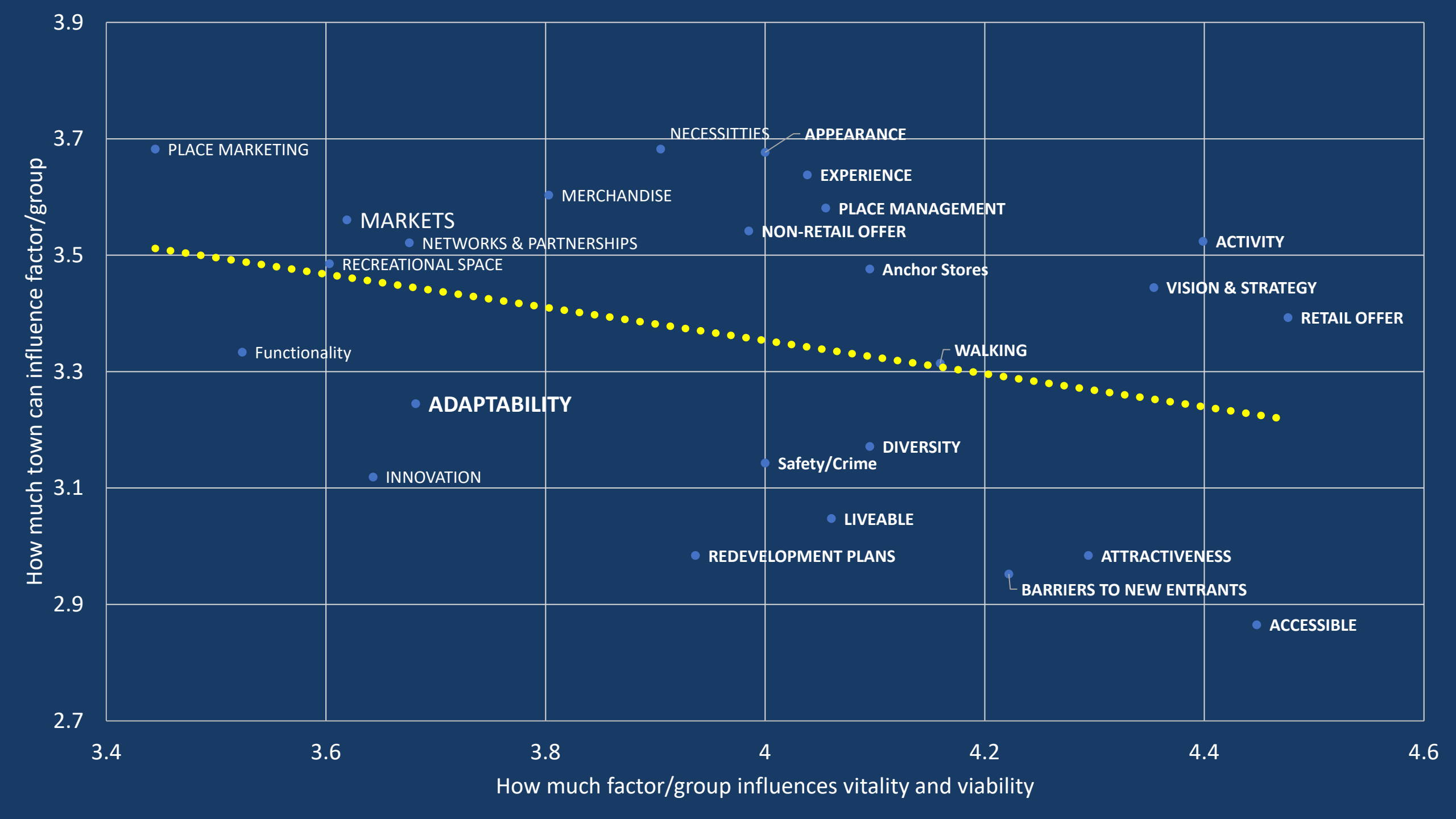


237 factors influence vitality and viability

#1 How much influence each factor has on the vitality and viability of the High Street?

#2 How much control a location has over the factor?


How much control over a factor
Not worth it
Get on with it!
Forget it
Live with it
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4
4.5
5
How much each factor influences vitality and viability


3.9
3.7
3.5
3.3
3.1
2.9
2.7
How much town can influence factor/group
3.4
3.6
3.8
4
4.2
4.4
4.6
How much factor/group influences vitality and viability
PLACE MARKETING
NECESSITTIES
APPEARANCE
EXPERIENCE
MERCHANDISE
PLACE MANAGEMENT
MARKETS
NON-RETAIL OFFER
NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS
ACTIVITY
RECREATIONAL SPACE
Anchor Stores
VISION & STRATEGY
RETAIL OFFER
Functionality
WALKING
ADAPTABILITY
DIVERSITY
Safety/Crime
INNOVATION
LIVEABLE
REDEVELOPMENT PLANS
ATTRACTIVENESS
BARRIERS TO NEW ENTRANTS
ACCESSIBLE

The 25 priority interventions: in order

ACTIVITY	NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS
RETAIL OFFER	ATTRACTIVENESS
VISION & STRATEGY	MARKETS
EXPERIENCE	RECREATIONAL SPACE
APPEARANCE	BARRIERS TO NEW ENTRANTS
PLACE MANAGEMENT	SAFETY/CRIME
NECESSITIES	LIVEABLE
ANCHORS	ADAPTABILITY
NON-RETAIL OFFER	ACCESSIBLE
MERCHANDISE	REDEVELOPMENT PLANS
WALKING	FUNCTIONALITY
PLACE MARKETING	INNOVATION
DIVERSITY	

The 25 priority interventions: putting plans into action!

- Shopping
- Work
- Leisure
- Transport
- Social exchange

ACTIVITY: Patterns of everyday usage

Indicative interventions: short term:

- Compare activity data with modal opening times
- Experiment with new opening times

- Improve synergies between high street and key place based anchors

Indicative interventions: long term

All centres might benchmark themselves against the 25 Priorities

Moving from plans to action: The 4Rs Framework

REPOSITIONING

REINVENTING

REBRANDING

RESTRUCTURING

knowing your town, using relevant data and information to develop a collaborative, inspiring vision that achieves change

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REBRANDING

RESTRUCTURING

knowing your town, using relevant data and information to develop a collaborative, inspiring vision that achieves change

activating and animating the town, diversifying its attractions, to become multifunctional

Offering different things that serve the community and draw in footfall and spend

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communicating this across the whole community – positive, consistent and effective messaging

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establishing an identity and sense of place that can engender pride, commitment and attachment

communicating this across the whole community – positive, consistent and effective messaging

putting in place the capacity, leadership and partnerships to deliver change

if large-scale spatial change is needed to transform your centre how will local governance need to change

Where do you think your town is?

Reposition

- We don’t know who uses our town centre
- We don’t know how our town centre functions
- We have data but don’t do anything with it
- We don’t have a clear idea about how future trends will affect the high street
- We don’t have a clear and shared vision for the future of the town centre

Reinvent

- We have plans but nothing is going on in our town centre
- We rely on the existing offer to drive footfall
- We rely mainly on shopping to attract people
- We find that local people go elsewhere for the products and services they need or want
- We don’t know how to change the offer in our centre

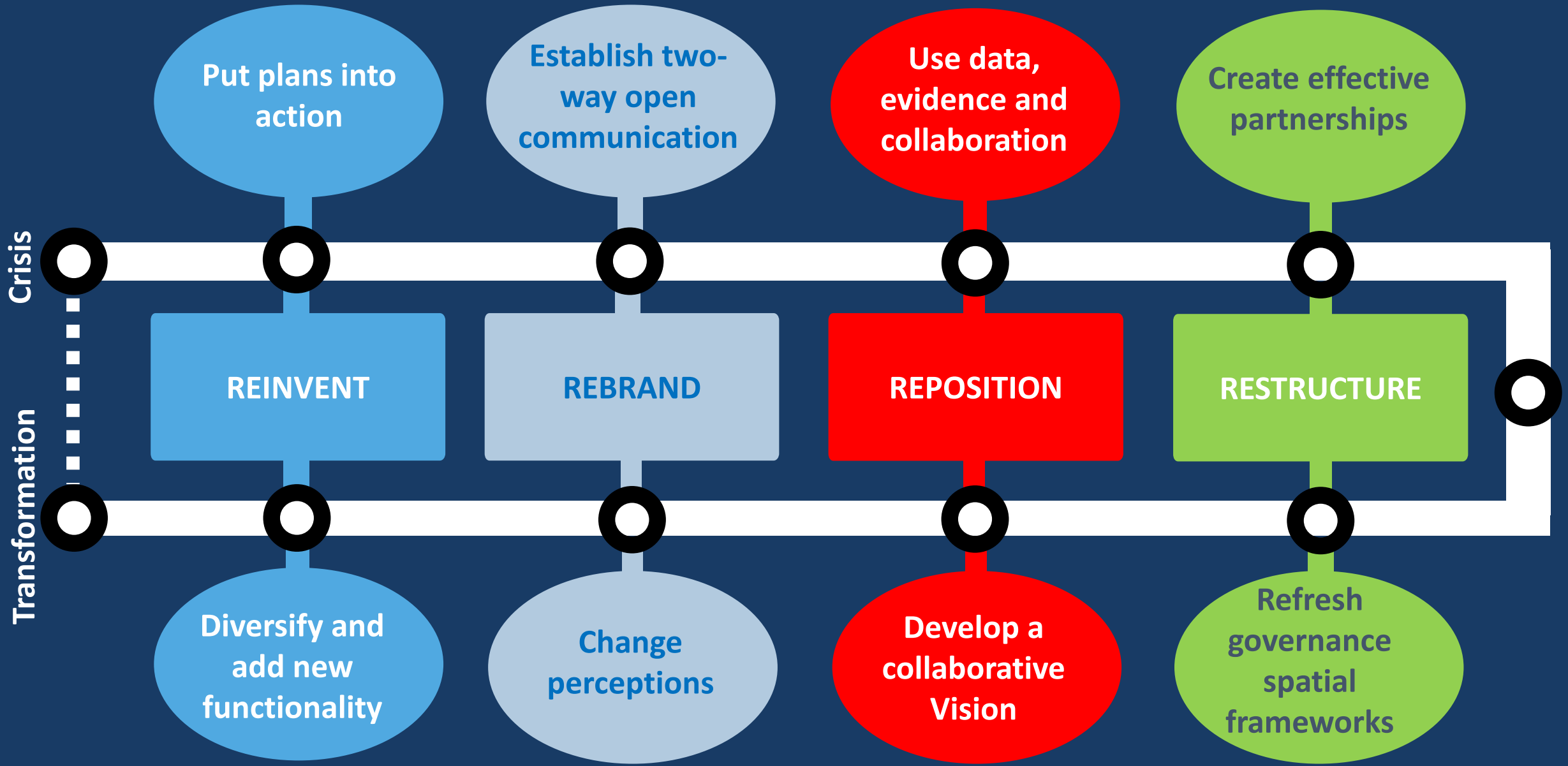
Rebrand

- We have lots of things happening but the town still has a poor reputation
- We need to change perceptions
- We don't communicate well with other local stakeholders
- We don’t do enough to celebrate local distinction and creativity
- We don’t have a clear sense of place

Restructure

- We can’t make decisions
- We have done things in past but they haven’t worked
- We don’t speak to other local stakeholders
- We don’t know how to engage with a wider group of stakeholders
- We need large-scale physical change to make a real difference

	#1	#2	#3	#4
Atherstone	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Bedworth	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Coleshill	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Kenilworth	Restructure	Reposition	Reinvent	Rebrand
Leamington	Restructure	Reposition	Reinvent	Rebrand
Nuneaton	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Polesworth	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Rugby	Reposition	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand
Southam	Reinvent	Restructure	Rebrand	Reposition
Stratford	Reposition	Restructure	Rebrand	Reinvent


Put plans into action
Establish two-way open communication
Use data, evidence and collaboration
Create effective partnerships
Crisis
REINVENT
REBRAND
REPOSITION
RESTRUCTURE
Recovery
Transformation
Diversify and add new functionality
Change perceptions
Develop a collaborative Vision
Refresh governance spatial frameworks

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Go through the recommendations– invite comment and feedback as to their viability, but also who is best placed to lead on each one

Reinventing: key recommendations

QUICK WINS	LONGER TERM
Review a range of place-based anchors (retail, employment, transport, green space, markets, heritage, culture), everyday activity that significantly attracts footfall in each town centre.	Ensure key place-based attractors are embedded in local plans and visions for the town centre and included in wider messaging.
Review and share place-making best-practices at a county level.	Undertake place-making workshops with local towns where this is a priority. The purpose of these workshops would be to engage local stakeholders in the generation of ideas for place-making activities, and to delegate delivery to specific organisations and individuals.
Establish a forum (either online/hybrid) for local stakeholders to share ideas, challenges, and best practice.	Each town to generate a programme of potential place-making interventions, tailored for each centre, drawing on mainly low-cost / short-term activities. Activities should be clearly linked to named organisations/individuals responsible for their delivery. Use footfall and other KPIs to measure impact on new activity.
Encourage local stakeholders to Review High Streets Taskforce Webinar: Reinventing – Making Vital and Viable Multifunctional Hubs	

Rebranding: key recommendations

QUICK WINS	LONGER TERM
Assess the digital footprint of each town centre	Undertake place sentiment analysis to inform and establish an evidence base for any wider reputational issues
Review stakeholder communication and devise a process for sharing news, events, and knowledge amongst local stakeholders. During this review, each town should consider: • Have the unique aspects of the town been uncovered and are they being promoted? • Do you have a nice town, but everyone talks it down? • Is everyone updated on what the plans are? • Is there lots of informal communication and networking?	On the back of visioning exercises, each town should construct a clear and positive message about their high street/town centre, that is shared consistently by local stakeholders.
Each town should develop low-cost and coordinated social media activity to communicate the centre-offer and increase its visibility to existing catchment and users.	Engage with wider stakeholders responsible for promoting Warwickshire at a county level, e.g., review alignment between local place promotion and DMO material.

Repositioning: key recommendations

QUICK WINS	LONGER TERM
Ensure footfall data is widely available and can be accessed by local traders, event organisers and other place-based stakeholders to demonstrate success of delivery.	Continue to track effectiveness of interventions in the town centre through monitoring and interpreting footfall data (volume and pattern of activity), providing impact assessment of events etc.
Review what other data is available for each town and devise a simple and cost-effective mechanism for sharing this information with local stakeholders e.g., create an online Warwickshire High Street and Town Centre monitoring hub.	Establish a clear and consistent method for collating footfall data in each town e.g., ideally installation of automated footfall counters. Data collection, analysis and data communication training for local government officers and other local stakeholders.
Review High Streets Task Force Webinar: Repositioning Developing Collaborative Inspiring Visions that Achieve Change. Conduct a review of existing town centres visions and score them by benchmarking against the IPM's 25 Priorities.	Undertake visioning workshops or exercises in each town and establish clear and collaborative visions for each centre, benchmarked against the IPM's 25 Priorities.

Restructuring: key recommendations

QUICK WINS	LONGER TERM
Each town should review its existing networks and partnerships, by conducting stakeholder mapping, and reach out to new or previously excluded groups who can contribute collaborative capacity. Where appropriate, each town might consider refreshing local networks to widen their diversity and add additional capacity to effect change locally	Each town to form a strategic leadership group (town team), but then also delegate specific responsibilities to sub-groups, with local authorities supporting the facilitation and co-ordination of this network
Refresh networks at a county-wide level to support closer alignment between regional policies and strategies involving high street revitalisation and place leadership	Establish county-wide High Streets Taskforce bringing together key strategic leads e.g., transport, tourism, business growth and development etc.
Review internal structures within Warwickshire County Council and to assess how different directors might better work together in support of place-based outcomes	Establish internal town-centre strategic team with representatives from different directorates.

PLACE STRATEGY

PLACE OPERATIONS

PLACE ANCHORS

Strategic spatial development

Planning

Urban design

Architecture

PLACE STRATEGY

PLACE OPERATIONS

PLACE ANCHORS

Regeneration

Landscape architecture

Tourism/Culture

Place branding

Strategic spatial development

Planning

Urban design

Architecture

PLACE STRATEGY

Regeneration

Landscape architecture

Tourism/Culture

Place branding

Street cleaning

Public realm maintenance

Telecoms/wifi

Environment

PLACE OPERATIONS

Traffic and highway

Police and security

Parking

PLACE ANCHORS

strategic spatial development

planning

urban design

architecture

PLACE STRATEGY

regeneration

landscape architecture

tourism/Culture

place branding

street cleaning

public realm maintenance

telecoms/wifi

environment

PLACE OPERATIONS

traffic and highway

police and security

parking

fitness and health

transit hub

employment

convenience

PLACE ANCHORS

education & training

heritage and culture

blue and green infrastructure

Final points

What is holding places back?

LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF DATA/ CHALLENGES/ OPPORTUNITIES AT LOCAL LEVEL

IMPORTANCE OF PLACE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP NOT WIDELY UNDERSTOOD

SIGNIFICANT CAPACITY GAP FOR COORDINATION IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES

LACK OF EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

VERY FEW VISIONS, MOST LACK DATA/EVIDENCE AND ADOPTION

LITTLE REAL ENGAGEMENT BY COMMUNITY AND BUSINESSES

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Download and produce your own place transformation routemap from the High Streets Task Force Website

placemanagement.org

HIGH STREETS TASK FORCE

Workshops and training

Support directory

Online learning

Resource library

www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk