



## WORKSHEET EN1: CHARACTER AND VITALITY OF THE TOWN

**Task:** to find out what aspects of the town and its hinterland give it character and vitality, and to describe the quality of these features.

### 1: Introduction to the task

Most market towns and their surrounding countryside contain environmental and historic features that help give the town a special character. Some of these may be well managed and in good repair; others may be neglected or in poor repair. Your task should cover both the built and the natural environment. You should also consider what activities are being undertaken by local groups to improve the environment and try to build on these activities. In so doing:

- Use the Local Plan and/or Town Design Statement for existing information and plans
- Try to assess what is distinctive about the town's environment (both natural and built)
- Think to the future and consider any concerns about wider environmental issues which may affect the town

If there is not enough information available, you could carry out a survey of the town to fill the gaps. A map of the distinctive areas may be a useful way to get a full picture.



## 2; Getting the following information will help you decide what is special about the environment of the area

Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<b>Sub-section 1: Description of the environmental features of the area</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps or aerial photographs</li> <li>• Local knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>Q 1 Where is the town situated within the local landscape?</p> <p><i>For example, is the town in a valley, in the open countryside, or alongside a river?</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps or aerial photographs</li> <li>• Local survey</li> </ul>	<p>Q 2 What are the distinctive features that define the limits of the town?</p> <p><i>For example, are there historic city walls, or a river or bypass?</i></p> <p>(Worksheets S5 Q6 and S6 Q6 also refer to environmental features and local distinctiveness).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local survey</li> <li>• District Council (ask for: Conservation Areas, Local Plan, Design Statement, Tree Preservation Orders)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 3 Landmarks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where are the town's natural environmental landmarks (for example, groups of trees, parkland, and nature areas)?</li> <li>Are they protected or well maintained?</li> </ol> <p>(Worksheets S5 Q6 and S6 Q6 also refer to environmental features and local distinctiveness).</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Local Biodiversity Action Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Q 4 Biodiversity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What areas are important for local biodiversity?</li> <li>b. What measures are in place to protect or enhance them?</li> </ol> <p><i>Consider, for example, bats, great crested newts, badgers, rare plants, insects or birds on the red list, or specific habitats.</i></p>	
<b>Sub-section 2: Built features of the town</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps</li> <li>• Aerial photographs</li> <li>• Local knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>Q 5 What is the shape and density of the town (that is, are buildings clustered together, dispersed or a mixture)?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1 &amp; 3 also refer to the built environment).</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Council (ask for: Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Local Plans)</li> <li>• Town Design Statement</li> <li>• Local history group</li> <li>• Tourist Information Office</li> </ul>	<p>Q 6</p> <p>Where are the town's distinctive built landmarks and conservation areas, and are they are in good condition?</p> <p>(Worksheet S6 Q6 also refers to local distinctiveness. Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11;S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Council</li> </ul>	<p>Q 7</p> <p>Development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What are the areas where there are rundown or derelict buildings needing repair or restoration?</li> <li>b. What plans are there to revitalise or redevelop these areas/buildings?</li> </ol> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11;S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. Worksheets EC6 Q1,8,9; S2; S5 Q10 and T1 Q3 also refer to development)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District Council (ask for Local Plan proposal map)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 8 What is the range of uses of buildings in the town?</p> <p><i>Are they, for example, for shopping, for housing, or used to provide employment?</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> <li>Town Design Statements</li> </ul>	<p>Q 9 Are the main routes into the town, including those from train and bus stations, attractive and in good condition?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> <li>Town Design Statements</li> </ul>	<p>Q 10 Are the main pedestrian routes between car parks and the town centre attractive, well maintained, well lit, and safe to use (for example, with security CCTV cameras in use) both day and night?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC7 Q13,14 and T1;T2 &amp; T3 also refer to pedestrian access)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local survey</li> <li>• District Council</li> <li>• Town Design Statements</li> </ul>	<p>Q 11 Are street fitting and fixtures in the town well located and in good condition?</p> <p><i>Look, for example, for cracked pavements, vandalised phone boxes, graffiti-covered walls, and overflowing or insufficient waste bins.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11;S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. WorksheetsEC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local survey</li> <li>• Town Design Statements</li> </ul>	<p>Q 12 Which areas of the town are over-cluttered with signs, street furniture, advertising hoardings, etc?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11;S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. WorksheetsEC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality)</p>	



<b>Sub-section 3: Environmental issues for the town</b>		
Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> <li>District Council (ask for Local Plan and Town Design Statements)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 13</p> <p>The town's environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the environmental issues facing the town?</li> <li>What plans are there to deal with them?</li> </ol> <p><i>Look, for example, at flooding, air and noise pollution, etc.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> <li>District Council (ask for Local Plan and Town Design Statements)-</li> </ul>	<p>Q 14</p> <p>Brown field land:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What brown field land is available for building?</li> <li>Is this available land being considered in planning decisions?</li> </ol> <p>(Worksheets EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality. Worksheets EC6 Q1,8,9; S2; S5 Q10 and T1 Q3 also refer to development)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District Council conservation officer</li> <li>Town Design Statement</li> </ul>	<p>Q 15</p> <p>What townscape or heritage initiatives are there?</p> <p><i>Examples may include: Historic Economic Regeneration Scheme, Local Heritage Initiatives, and Conservation Areas.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local planning office</li> <li>Estate Agents</li> <li>Local council Offices</li> </ul>	<p>Q15</p> <p>What land and buildings that could help the town's initiatives are available for purchase (and are they at affordable prices?)</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment)</p>	



3: This part is called a SWOT analysis, where you identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Once you have the information, use this table to show the Strengths and Weaknesses in the environmental character and condition of the area. Also flag up where there are Opportunities to improve things or where there might be Threats in the future. The conclusions give the basis for a summary that can go forward to the Healthcheck Report.

You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
Does the town make the most of its natural environmental features? If there are opportunities for improvements to areas, what/where are they?							
Does the town have vitality and character, and does it keep its distinctive buildings and streets in good repair and in use? If not, what could be improved?							
Are there any major environmental concerns are being addressed and planned for? Are there any gaps?							



## WORKSHEET EN2: THE TOWN & THE WIDER COUNTRYSIDE

**Task:** to record the quality of the town's surrounding countryside, how it is changing and the links it has with the town

### 1: Introduction to the task

Market towns and their surrounding countryside are linked both visually and physically. Most of the practical links between the town and its surrounding countryside (hinterland) are based on the town's traditional role as marketplace, shopping centre and the source of necessary local services for those living in the area. It is important for market towns to appreciate the changes happening in the countryside and to be able to adjust their services and facilities to meet changing needs. During this task try to:

- Identify the important present and past features that link the residents of town and countryside residents and their what they do for a living
- Assess the impact of management practices on the quality of the countryside
- Where appropriate make links to Worksheet T2: Accessibility of services

If your County Council has not already carried out a landscape assessment of the surrounding countryside, you could map your own findings to help people understand the character of the surrounding countryside.



## 2: Getting the following information will help you define the environmental links between the town and countryside

Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<b>Sub-section: Links between town and countryside</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maps or aerial photographs</li> <li>• Local survey</li> </ul>	<p>Q 1 What is the location and impact of any natural or man-made features such as rivers, canals, roads or railway lines that physically or visually link the town and country?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. Worksheets S5 Q6; S6 Q5 also refer to environmental features)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local survey</li> </ul>	<p>Q 2 Are there unique design elements found in both the town and the surrounding countryside?</p> <p><i>Look, for example, at distinctive local house types, local architectural detailing and use of local materials.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. Worksheet S6 Q5 also refers to local distinctiveness)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> <li>Local Tourist Board</li> <li>Maps</li> </ul>	<p>Q 3 What are the memorable views either from the town to the countryside, or from the countryside to the town, and where can they be seen from?</p> <p>(Worksheet S6 Q5 also refers to local distinctiveness)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local knowledge</li> <li>Local History Group</li> <li>Local Tourist Board</li> <li>Library</li> </ul>	<p>Q 4 What historic commercial links such as market halls, a corn exchange, mills, wharves, market squares between the town and country are still evident?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. Worksheet S6 Q5 also refers to local distinctiveness)</p>	
Local survey	<p>Q 5 Does the character of the surrounding countryside become less distinct the closer it gets to the town edge?</p> <p>(Worksheets S5 Q6; S6 Q5 also refer to environmental features. Worksheet S6 Q5 also refers to local distinctiveness)</p>	
Sub-section: Countryside landscape character		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>County Council (ask for landscape character assessment)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 6 What are the unique characteristics of the local countryside?</p> <p><i>Look, for example, at farmed land, heath or moorland, open, small fields with hedgerows or dry stone walls, and traditional settlements.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets S5 Q6; S6 Q5 also refer to environmental features. Worksheet S6 Q5 also refers to local distinctiveness)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Council (ask for Local Plan)</li> <li>• County Council</li> <li>• English Nature</li> <li>• Local Wildlife Trust</li> </ul>	<p>Q 7</p> <p>What areas are covered by national, regional or local landscape, conservation or wildlife designations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Parks</li> <li>• Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</li> <li>• RAMSAR</li> <li>• Special Protection Areas</li> <li>• Special Areas of Conservation</li> <li>• National Nature Reserves (NNR)</li> <li>• Local Nature Reserves (LNR)</li> <li>• Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</li> <li>• Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</li> </ul> <p>(Worksheet EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Council (ask for: Local Plans, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, archaeologically important areas, Historic Parks and Gardens)</li> <li>• English Heritage</li> </ul>	<p>Q 8</p> <p>Areas of historic importance:</p> <p>a. What areas of historic importance have concentrations of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listed Buildings</li> <li>• Conservation Areas</li> <li>• historic parkland</li> <li>• Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)</li> <li>• Areas of Archaeological Importance</li> </ul> <p>b. What other areas of historic importance are there?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11;S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment. Worksheets S5 Q6; S6 Q5 also refer to environmental features)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<b>Sub-section: Countryside landscape quality, use &amp; management</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Council</li> <li>• Dept for Environment, Food &amp; Rural Affairs (DEFRA). (Ask regional office)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 9</p> <p>Land:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What are the proportions of agricultural land at Grade 1, 2 or 3a?</li> <li>b. Where are they?</li> </ol>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEFRA for current schemes)</li> <li>• Environment Agency</li> <li>• County Council</li> </ul>	<p>Q 10</p> <p>What areas of the countryside are being managed through national agri-environment schemes? Current schemes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Stewardship Scheme</li> <li>• Environmentally Sensitive Areas</li> <li>• Nitrate Sensitive Areas</li> <li>• Habitat Scheme</li> <li>• Moorland Scheme</li> <li>• Organic Aid Scheme</li> <li>• Countryside Access Scheme</li> </ul> <p>(Worksheet EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality)</p>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet (local community network)</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Local Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 11 Groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How do community and voluntary groups participate in the management of the local countryside?</li> <li>b. How do they contribute to the town's and surrounding countryside's conservation?</li> </ol> <p>(Worksheets EC2 Q5; EC3 Q10; S4; S6 also refer to community involvement)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business directory</li> <li>• Local knowledge</li> </ul>	<p>Q 12 Is there a horticulture or market gardening industry on the outskirts of the town which supplies the town markets?</p> <p><i>If yes, identify proportionally how much they do supply.</i></p> <p>(Worksheets EC2 Q2,3; EC5; also refer to land-based industries)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil Association (look at organic farmers and growers)</li> <li>• Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF)</li> </ul>	<p>Q 13 How many local agricultural or horticultural produce businesses are certified organic producers or members of other environmental standards schemes?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC2 Q2,3; EC5; also refer to land-based industries. Worksheets EC7 Q12; S5 Q9 also refer to food)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Council Local Plan</li> </ul>	<p>Q 14 Changes: Are there plans for future major change on the urban edge? What are they and when are they planned for? What landscape impacts might they to have?</p>	



	Look, for example, at community forest land, etc.	
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<b>You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:</b>	<b>Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:</b>	Conclusion				
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat
Do the town and its surrounding countryside have established, strong links, and are these being maintained? If the links are weaker than they used to be, why is this?						
Looking at the quality of the surrounding countryside, its sensitive areas and its potential, are any areas in need of support/strengthening?						
What are the changes that are happening in the surrounding countryside and how well these are being managed? How can the market town help with these changes to management practices?						
What potential is there to increase the extent of community involvement in the management and conservation of the countryside?						



### WORKSHEET EN3: THE ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

**Task:** to establish the effects of the quality of the town's and countryside's environment on the quality of life.

#### 1: Introduction to the task

The way people live and work has an impact on the quality of the environment. Many people now want to “do their bit for the environment”, particularly in their own local area. This task will help you to consider:

- *How and where residents can use or support environmentally friendly initiatives*
- *How and where community members interact with their environment for leisure and recreation*
- *Where appropriate make links to Worksheets*
  - *T2: Accessibility of services*
  - *S5: Sport, Leisure and Open Spaces*
  - *T3: Ease of Movement around the Town*



## 2: Getting the following information will help you review how environmental quality could be enhanced to improve peoples' quality of life

Starting points for information	Information you need	Information
<b>Sub-section: Environmental sustainability</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District Council</li> <li>Local community group</li> <li>Charity schemes</li> </ul>	<p>Q 1 What opportunities are there for people to understand and become active in reducing or managing waste? Include sustainable waste management such as collection points, facilities and support offered, and consider local schemes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recycle</li> <li>re-use</li> <li>produce bio-gas energy</li> <li>compost organic waste</li> </ul> <p>(Worksheets EC2 Q5; EC3 Q10; S4; S6 also refer to community involvement)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Authority</li> </ul>	<p>Q 2 How are energy conservation methods and local renewable energy sources used within the town and the surrounding countryside?</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Authority</li> </ul>	<p>Q 3 Low carbon initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What initiatives are in operation for the town to become a low carbon area?</li> <li>How are these initiatives contributing to improved air quality, health and creation of employment opportunities?</li> </ol>	



Starting points for information	Information you will need	Answers and notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Authority Planning Dept</li> <li>Local builders</li> </ul>	<p>Q 4 What use is being made of sustainable building materials for new buildings within the town?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC6 Q1; EC7 Q18; S2, S3 Q11; S5 Q8 and S6 Q1&amp; 3 also refer to the built environment)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local survey</li> </ul>	<p>Q 5 Where goods and products from the local countryside are produced, how many of them carry a local Environmental Quality Mark (EQM)?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality. Worksheets EC2 Q2,3; EC5; also refer to land-based industries. Worksheets EC7 Q12; S5 Q9 also refer to food)</p>	
<b>Sub-section: Quality of life through leisure and recreation</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Authority</li> </ul>	<p>Q 6 Do community open spaces, sites and facilities currently available for informal recreation and amenity meet the needs of the local people?</p> <p>(Worksheets EC7 Q10,17,18; S3 Q7,11 also refer to environmental quality. Worksheet S5 refers to open space. Worksheets EC7 Q13; S5; S6; T3 Q17 also refer to recreation &amp; leisure)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Authority</li> <li>Local survey</li> <li>Tourist or Visitor Information Centre</li> </ul>	<p>Q 7 What recreation routes for walking and cycling are available to local people?</p> <p>(Worksheet EC7 Q13,14; T1 Q5; T2 Q6; T3 also refer to pedestrian access ; Worksheets EC7 Q13; S5; S6; T3 Q17 also refer to recreation &amp; leisure)</p>	



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You need to consider what the information you have gathered tells you in the light of these questions:	Write your answers here. Base them on the information you have gathered:	Conclusion					
		It's a Fact	Strength	Weakness	Opportunity	Threat	Need more info
To what extent do people fully consider promoting and supporting environmentally sustainable initiatives? Are there any gaps or opportunities to extend these actions?							
What improvements could be made in amenities such as open spaces, sites, routes and facilities for informal recreation that enhance the quality of life for local people be made? Are there any potential open spaces or sites that could be developed?							