

Introduction

The Community Barometer provides new insight into the provision of shops and other local commercial services, their role in benefitting the community, and how people feel about them.

To get an idea of how different stakeholders feel about the services in their local area, we have surveyed three key stakeholder groups - MPs, consumers and councillors.

The surveys that we conducted ask the following questions of each group:

- Which of the following types of services do you think are the **most essential** for the communities in your local area?
- Which of the following types of services do you believe have the **most positive impact on reducing loneliness** in your local area?
- How **satisfied, if at all, are you with the provision** of each of the following types of services in your local area?
- For each of the following types of services, please indicate whether you think that it would be beneficial for your local area to have **more or less of these types of services**, or if you think the number should remain the same.
- Which of the following types of services do you believe have the **most positive impact** on your local area?

The services that we ask about are as follows:

**Convenience Stores | Specialist Food Shops | Banks | Post Offices | Non Food Shops | Pharmacies | Restaurants
Pubs/Bars | Coffee Shops | Petrol Stations | Fast Food Shops | Betting Shops | Pawnbrokers | Charity Shops**

By comparing how these three different groups feel about the provision of services available close to where they live, what they would like more or less of, and what they see as positive service provision in their local area (both overall and in the role of reducing loneliness); we have generated insights that could inform decision making in national and local government, as well as helping convenience retailers as they consider how to make investments in their business in new services for their local customers.

More information about the methodology for this research, as well as previous versions of the Community Barometer are available on the ACS website at www.acs.org.uk

Consumers

Top Three: Most **Positive Impact** on the Local Area

POST OFFICES

CONVENIENCE STORES

COFFEE SHOPS

Top Three: Most Impact in **Reducing Loneliness**

COFFEE SHOPS

PUBS / BARS

CONVENIENCE STORES

Top Three: **Most Essential** Service in the Local Area

POST OFFICES

PHARMACIES

CONVENIENCE STORES

Most Wanted Services



Consumers are generally very positive about the role that convenience stores play in their local area, placing them in the top three services for the key metrics of positive impact, reducing loneliness and being an essential service. While convenience stores don't rate highly as a 'most wanted' service, this is likely because consumers are happy with the number of convenience stores in their local area.

MPs

Top Three: Most **Positive Impact** on the Local Area

POST OFFICES

COFFEE SHOPS

PUBS / BARS

Top Three: Most Impact in **Reducing Loneliness**

COFFEE SHOPS

PUBS / BARS

POST OFFICES

Top Three: **Most Essential** Service in the Local Area

POST OFFICES

PHARMACIES

CONVENIENCE STORES

Most Wanted Services



While MPs clearly value the role that Post Offices play in their local community, those opinions do not extend to convenience stores (where most Post Offices are located). MPs do recognise how essential the role is that convenience stores play, but more work needs to be done with MPs to highlight the overall positive impact that they have on local communities. Across party lines, Labour MPs feel much more strongly about convenience stores as an essential service than those in other parties.

Councillors

Top Three: Most **Positive Impact** on the Local Area

POST OFFICES

COFFEE SHOPS

CONVENIENCE STORES

Top Three: Most Impact in **Reducing Loneliness**

COFFEE SHOPS

POST OFFICES

CONVENIENCE STORES

Top Three: **Most Essential** Service in the Local Area

POST OFFICES

PHARMACIES

CONVENIENCE STORES

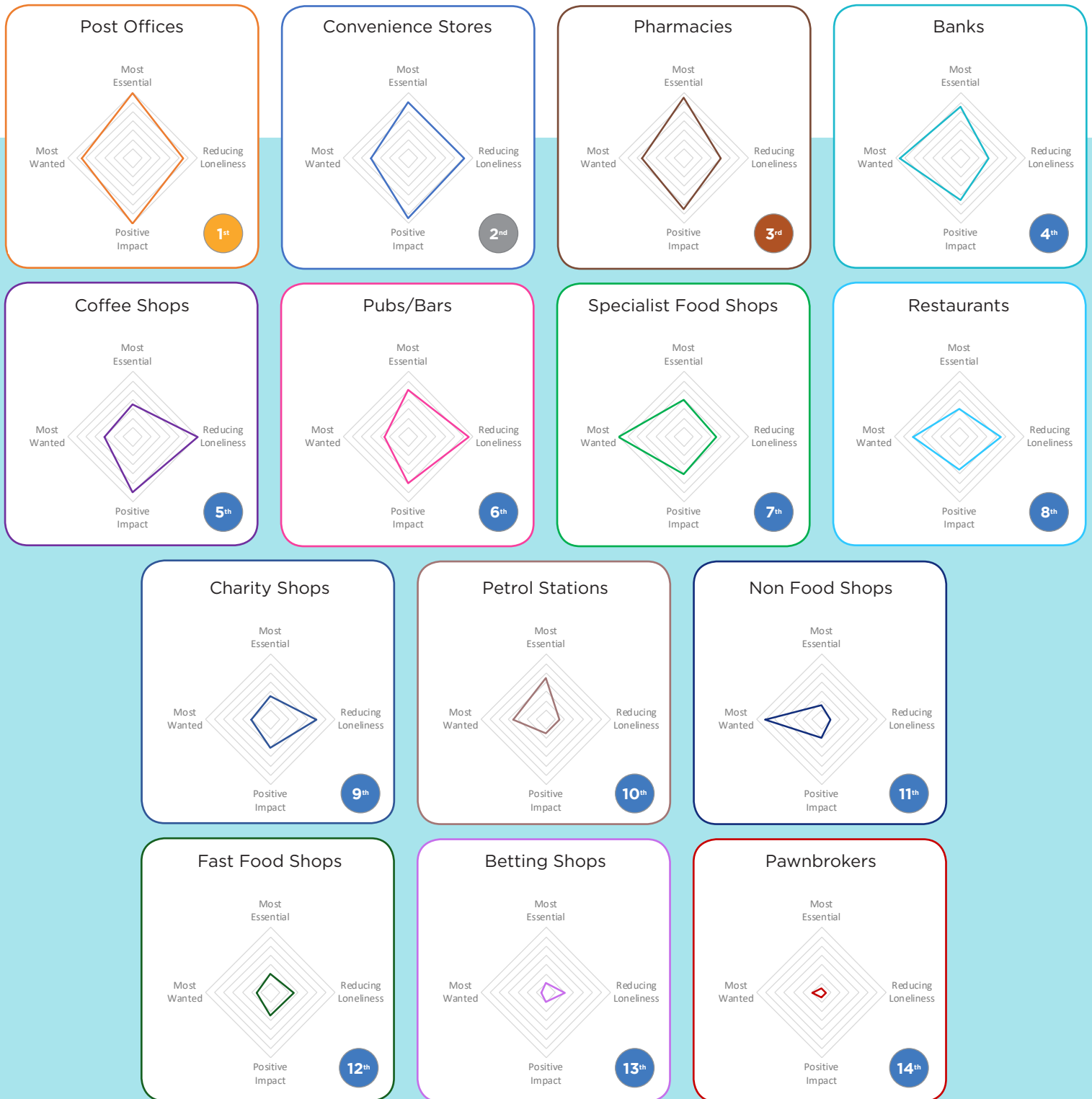
Most Wanted Services



The views of councillors track much more closely to those of consumers than MPs do. Convenience stores poll well with councillors across the board, and when asked about whether they wanted more or fewer convenience stores in their area, 32% of councillors said they wanted more with just 3% saying that they want fewer.

Comparing Services

The Community Barometer provides more detail on the overall ranking of each service below. Each service has been ranked from 1-14 on the four key survey questions and then mapped to provide a snapshot of the comparative importance of that service to local consumers.



About ACS

The Association of Convenience Stores is the voice of over 33,500 local shops, supporting its members through effective lobbying, comprehensive advice and innovative networking opportunities. ACS' core purpose is to lobby Government on the issues that make a difference to local shops.

For more information about the Community Barometer, please contact Katie Cross at katie.cross@acs.org.uk.