

Broseley: Town Centre Audit Analysis, 2025



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Introduction

An audit of businesses operating in Broseley's main shopping streets was undertaken in September 2025 as part of a longitudinal research study reviewing the vibrancy of Shropshire's main market towns and key settlements. Broseley centre was first audited in July 2019 and then again in September every year between 2020 and 2025. The objective of these audits is to provide a snapshot of the vitality of the town by investigating:

- The range and diversity of the retail offer
- The number and types of non-retail businesses operating
- The number and location of vacant properties
- The level of business churn—how many businesses are closing and opening each year
- Distinctive characteristics within the town, for example a strong tourism offer or a high penetration of “low end” traders
- The amount, location and type of domestic residences in the centre of the town

The research also aims to monitor change over time. The functionality of the High Street has been changing for some time, with internet shopping a key factor that has impacted. In September 2025, 27.2% of all retail sales were attributable to on-line purchases. Through 2020 and 2021 the coronavirus pandemic posed additional challenges to High Street businesses. The 2020 audits for all towns took place in September, following the first national lockdown. Non-essential retail and hospitality businesses were able to trade at this time (albeit with strict social distancing measures in place). The 2021 audits also took place when High Street businesses were able to trade. By 2022 High Streets were trading normally with no Covid-19 restrictions, but the cost of living crisis was gathering pace. Inflation was elevated in 2023, which also impacted people's spending power. Inflation has since fallen significantly, albeit still above the Bank of England target, but interest rates are comparatively high and economic confidence remains low.

Key Findings

- 45 commercial units, occupying 4,600m² gross floor space.
- Amongst the smallest centres in Shropshire, accounting for less than 2% of all Shropshire High Street traders (only Cleobury Mortimer & Highley smaller).
- Lower than average number of stores per head of population at a rate of 7.4 units per 1,000 population (13 across Shropshire). Only Highley and Albrighton have a lower rate.
- Average store size 103m²— much smaller than average for Shropshire (147m²) and second smallest in Shropshire (behind Shifnal).
- 86 residential premises in the main shopping area, giving a ratio of 0.5:1 commercial versus residential properties.
- Broseley had a very low churn rate in 2021 at just 4%. This compares with a rate of 15% in 2020. By 2022, the level of churn was up to 13% and by 2023 to 17%. In 2024 it fell back down to 13%. It fell even further to just 7% in 2025. Overall change since 2019 is amongst the lowest in Shropshire.
- The overall number of commercial premises has decreased since 2019, with five former business properties being converted into residential accommodation between 2019 and 2020 and one between 2023 and 2024.
- 2% of all commercial premises were vacant in 2025, which equates with just one unit. This represents a significant decrease since 2023. The vacancy rate is now amongst the lowest in Shropshire and compares favourably with the county average of 11%.
- Retail services and comparison retail account for the largest share of business premises, with a combined share of 38%.
- Broseley is not a main comparison retail centre, with the category accounting for just 18% of all units. This is amongst the lowest across the Shropshire towns.
- The share attributable to retail services is comparable with the Shropshire average.
- 16% of all commercial units in the town are occupied by tourism & leisure businesses—this is the highest proportion across the towns surveyed and is twice as high as the average.
- The convenience sector is also well represented in Broseley, accounting for 13% of units (6% on average for Shropshire).

Methodology Statement

Only the main retail centre of the town was surveyed, as shown on Map 4.

Both retail and non-retail businesses will be operating in other parts of the town.

All commercial premises within the defined area were audited, and classified as:

- Comparison Retail—defined as stores selling non-food/drink/tobacco products
- Convenience Retail—defined as stores selling food/drink/tobacco products
- Retail Service— defined as stores selling a service rather than a product, such as hair dressers or travel agents
- Financial & Business Services — for example, banks, solicitors, accountants, estate agents
- Health - including dentists, health centres, GP practices, alternative therapies
- Restaurants & Takeaways—including cafés and tea rooms
- Tourism & Leisure—hotels and public houses/bars as well as visitor attractions and cultural assets
- Education & Community Facilities—including schools, colleges, libraries, community centres
- Other Non-Retail
- Vacant

Gross floor space was matched to each premise using OS Master Map. It should be noted, that where two outlets shared the same premise (as shown on Master Map) an assumption was made that both occupied the same amount of floor space. For multi-storey buildings occupied by multiple businesses, it is assumed that all floors have the same gross space. Unless it is clear that a single business occupies more than one floor of a building, it has been assumed that it occupies only one floor. This means that in some cases, gross floor space may be under-estimated as some traders use upper floors for storage. No estimate relating to net floor space has been made.

Businesses occupying above ground floor level premises have only been included in this audit if their presence is clear from street level (by door signs or external hoardings for example). It is likely, therefore, that some non-consumer businesses operating in the area may have been missed.

Premises are assumed to have changed hands if their name or function has changed since the 2024 audit. In some cases though, ownership may be unchanged but the business has been rebranded or renamed.

An estimate of the number of domestic residences in the main retail centre has been made using OS LPI using all residential classification codes.

Retail Centre Hierarchy

Town centres represent important employment, entertainment and shopping hubs for their local population and hinterland. They also represent an important component of the visitor economy.

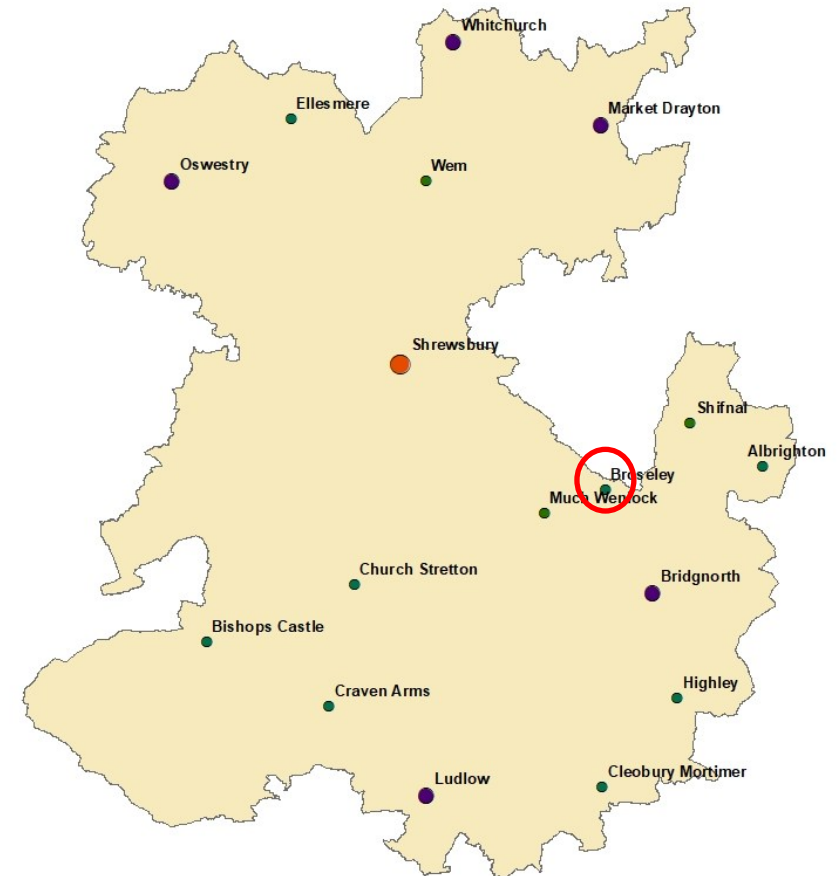
However, not all centres have comparable functions. Larger centres tend to attract workers and shoppers from much further afield than smaller centres, and consequently offer a much greater volume and variety of retail trade and consumer and business services.

In order to benchmark Shropshire towns against each other in an appropriate manner, the following hierarchy has been adopted:

- Tier 1: Shrewsbury
- Tier 2: Bridgnorth
Ludlow
Oswestry
Market Drayton
Whitchurch
- Tier 3: Albrighton
Bishops Castle
Broseley
Church Stretton
Cleobury Mortimer
Craven Arms
Ellesmere
Highley
Much Wenlock
Shifnal
Wem

Broseley is one of the smallest retail centres in Shropshire, with fewer than 50 commercial premises.

Map 1: Shropshire's Main Retail Centres



About Broseley

Broseley is a small market town located in the east of Shropshire. The town's origins can be traced back before the Domesday register. Originally a small agricultural area, it really began to thrive during the industrial revolution. Located along the southern bank of the River Severn, the famous Iron Bridge was built to link Broseley to Coalbrookdale. Today it has a population of 6,000 (ONS mid-year estimates 2024) and 2,596 households (2021 Census). Its population has increased marginally (by 1.1%) since 2021. It is currently the tenth largest settlement in Shropshire.

Broseley is located three miles to the west of the A442, which provides access north to Telford Town Centre and to the M54 (nine miles) and south to Bridgnorth (six miles). Taking the M54 westbound leads to Shrewsbury, while the West Midlands conurbation is to the east. The nearest mainline railway station to Broseley is Telford Central (eight miles).

The total population within a 10 mile radius is approximately 234,200.

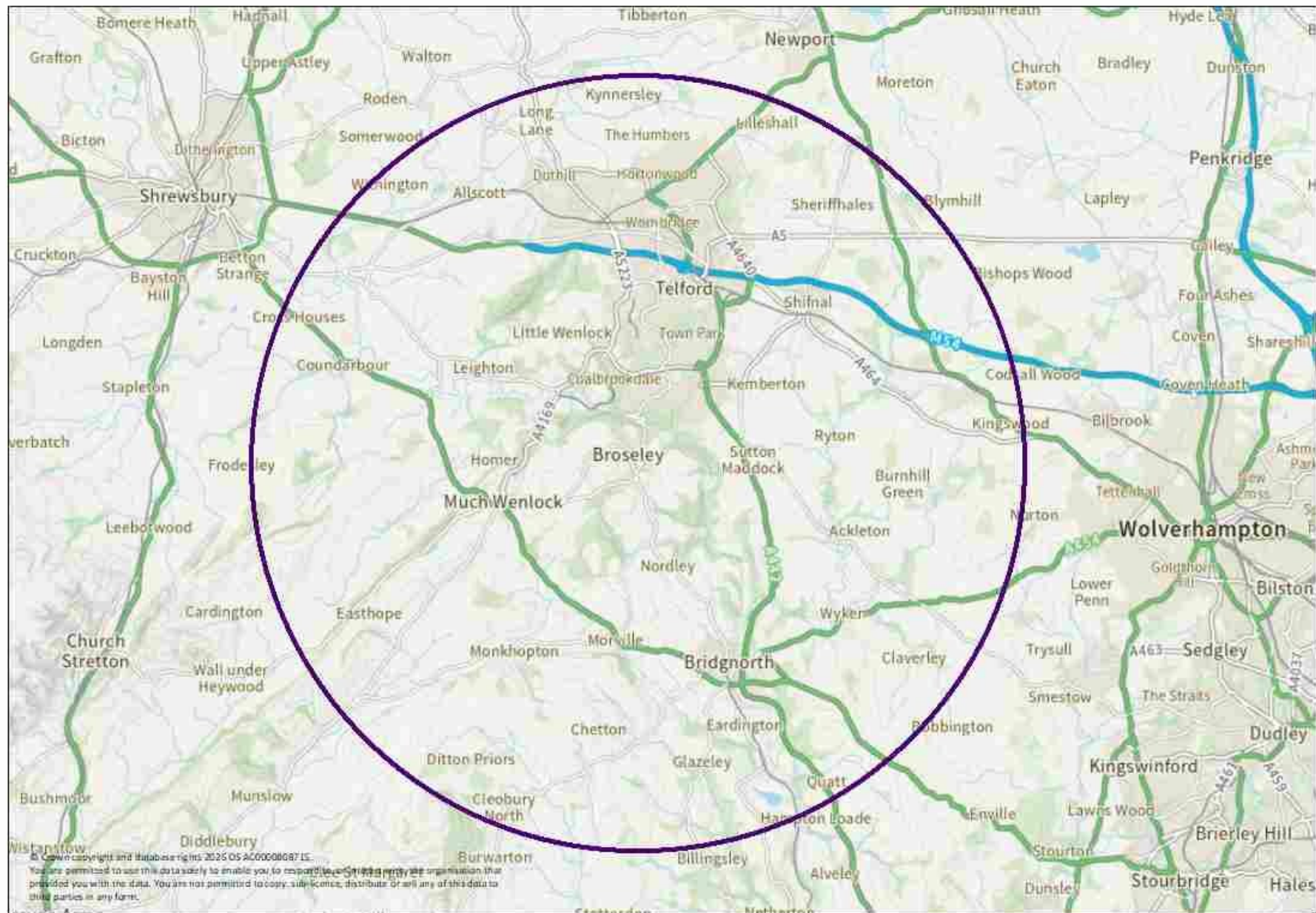
Broseley provides approximately 800 jobs across the town council area (*ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2024*). A significant proportion of local residents work outside the immediate local area, and as such the town is not one of Shropshire's key employment hubs. Key sectors include:

- Manufacturing (22.1% of jobs)
- Wholesale (14.1% of jobs)
- Accommodation & Food Services (13.5% of all jobs)
- Education (12.9% of jobs)
- Health (7.4% of jobs)

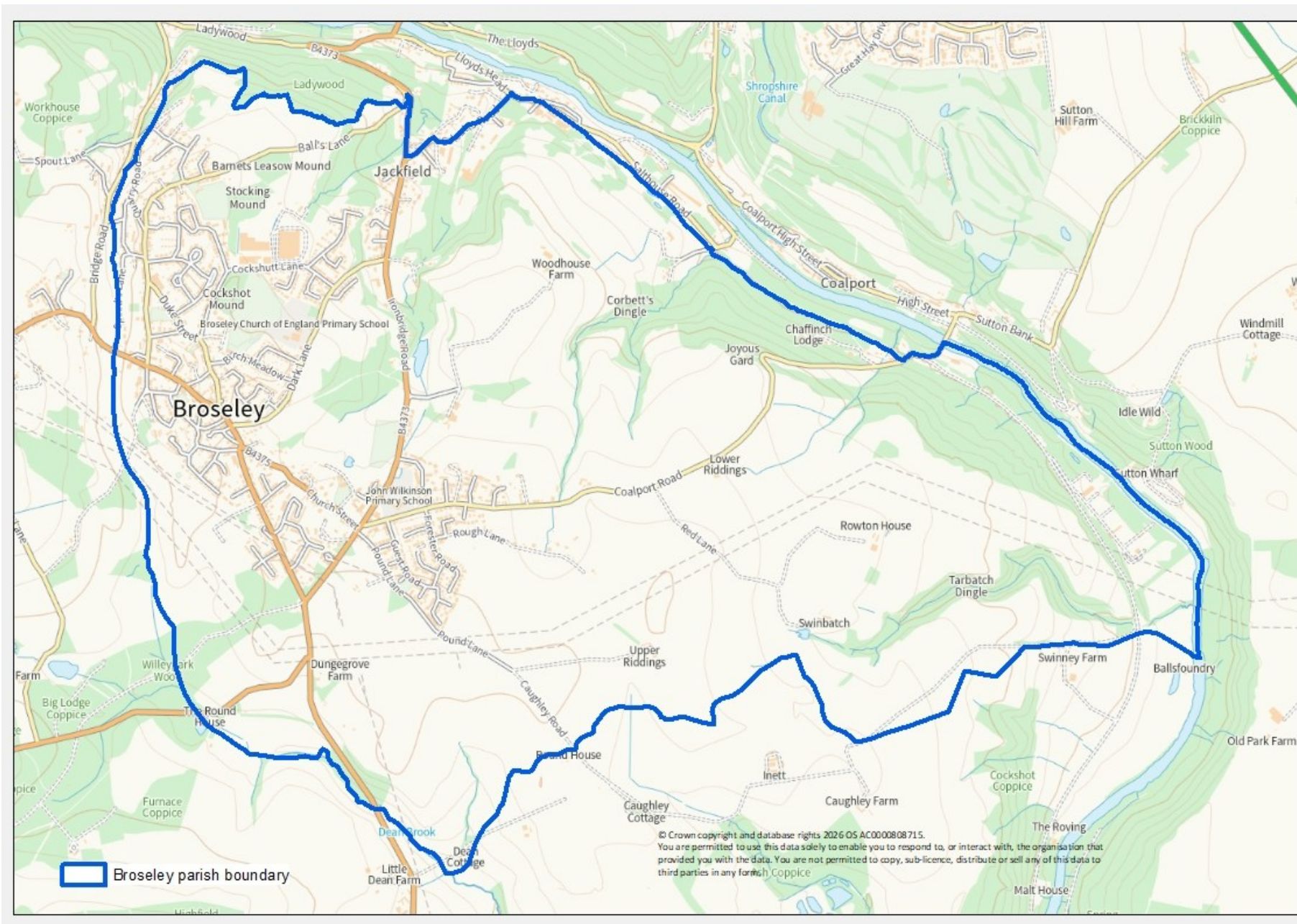
Overall, Broseley town council area (depicted on Map 3) covers an area of 741 hectares. The main shopping area (depicted on Map 4) is much smaller than this, at around 2 hectares.

The town comprises predominantly independent retail and there is a significant amount of residential housing stock in the main shopping area of the town. The town serves primarily its own local population, many of whom will also travel to nearby Bridgnorth or Telford where there is a more extensive retail and leisure offer.

Map 2: Location of Broseley showing 10 mile radius



Map 3: Broseley Town Council Area



Key Audit Results

A total of 45 commercial premises are contained within the Broseley survey area. These are primarily in High Street (32 business premises), with smaller numbers in Barber Row, Church Street, Delphside, Hockley Road and the Square. Gross floor space allocated to these businesses is just over 4,600m² (over two-thirds on High Street). The average store size is 103m² with units ranging in size from 21m² to 293m².

There was no change in the number of commercial units operating between 2020 and 2023. However, five commercial outlets were lost between the 2019 and 2020 audits. These have since been converted/ are being converted into residential premises. A further commercial premise was lost in 2024 with the conversion of another vacant unit into residential property. In addition, in 2023, one commercial unit was split into two, with one side being converted into residential property and the other remaining commercial. There was no change in commercial units/space in 2025.

The highest proportion of commercial units are allocated to retail services and comparison retail, with the former accounting for 20% of units and for 18.5% of floor space in 2025. Comparison retail accounted for 17.8% and 11.7% of units and floor space respectively. Tourism and leisure operators account for the highest share of floor space (26.5%) as well as for 15.6% of units. Restaurants and takeaways account for 15.6% of units but for a lower share of floor space (10.8%). Convenience retail takes a share of 15.6% of units and for 16.2% of floor space. There are also a small number of financial and business service providers, which account for 6.7% of units (7.1% of floor space). Comparison retail is slightly under-represented in the town and tourism and leisure over-represented.

There is just one vacant premise in Broseley (2.2% of units), which is the equivalent of 0.7% of floor space.

Chart 1: Number of Broseley Commercial Premises, 2019-2025

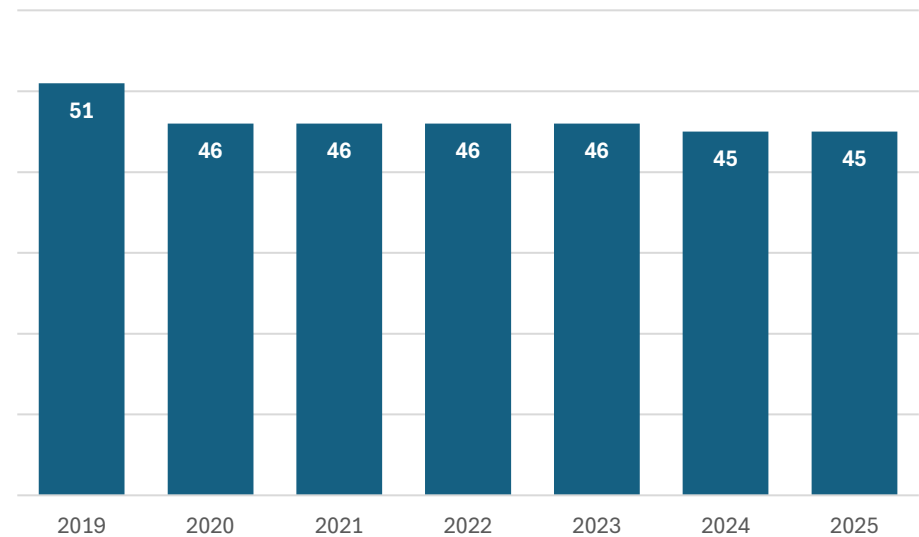
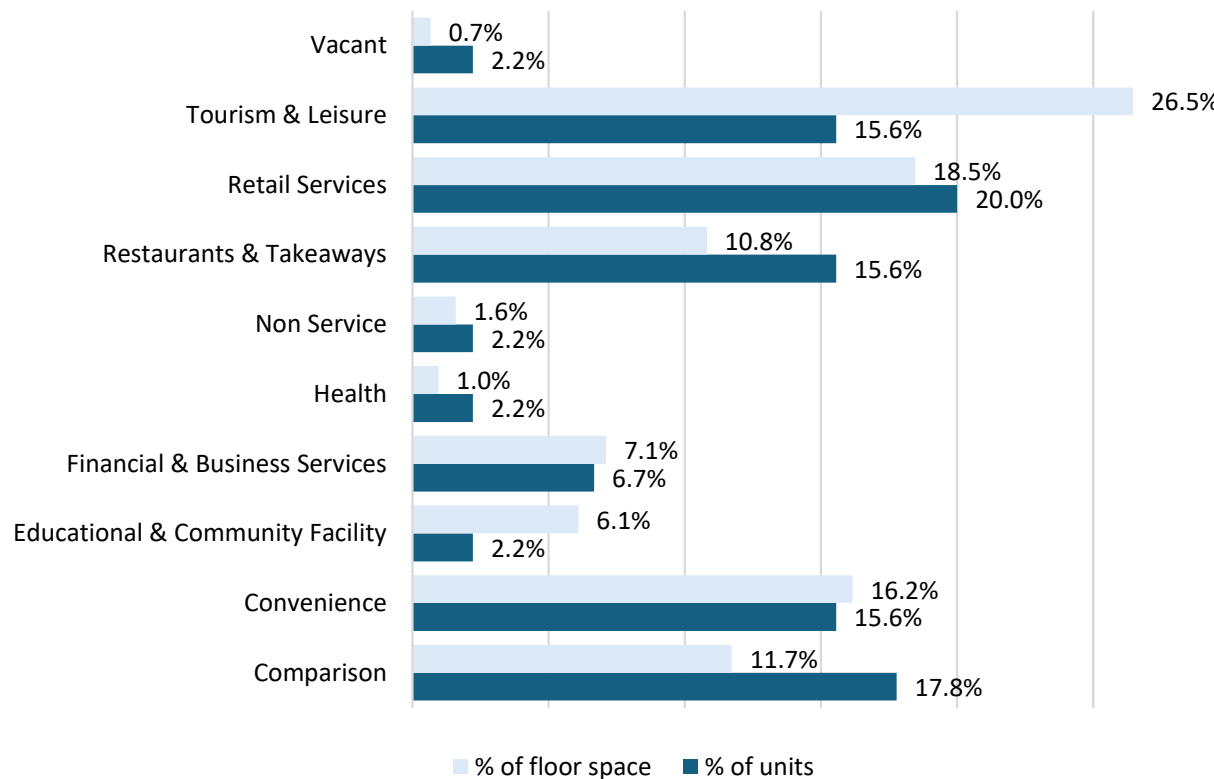


Chart 2: Breakdown of Broseley Commercial Premises by Classification, 2025



Change since 2024

There have been only small changes in Broseley town centre over the last year, with an additional operator in convenience retail and in restaurants & takeaways. In contrast, there are two fewer vacant premises. There has been no change in the number operating in comparison retail, tourism & leisure, retail services or finance and business services.

Churn in 2025 (compared with 2024) was much lower in Broseley than in the previous two years, at 7% compared with 13% in 2024 and 17% in 2023. The level of churn has fluctuated considerably in recent years, standing at just 4% in 2021. The level of churn in 2025 was amongst the lowest in Shropshire (13% on average).

Chart 3: Change in Number of Units by Category, 2024/25

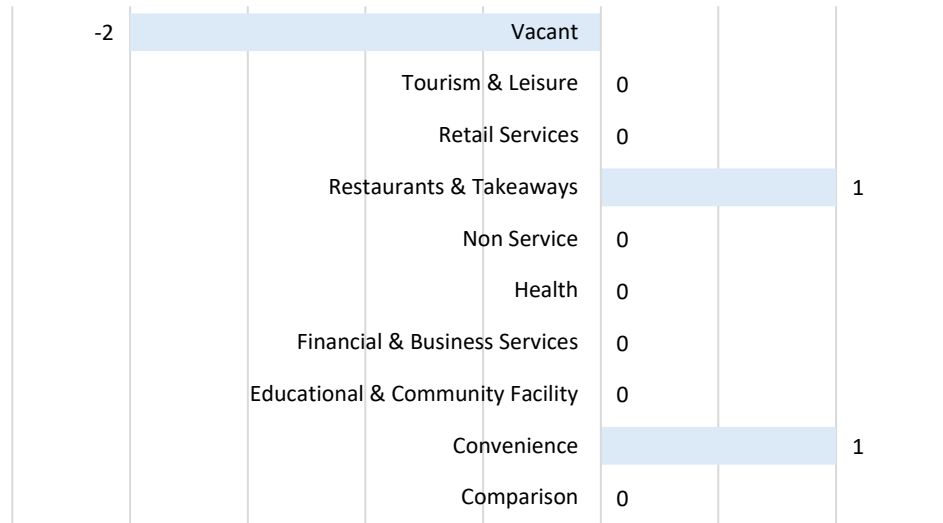


Chart 4: Levels of Business Churn, 2019-2025

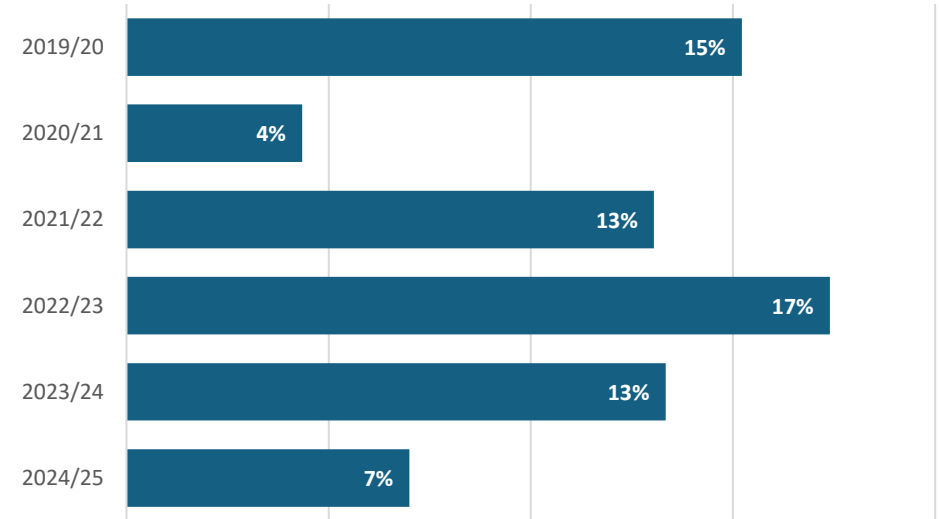
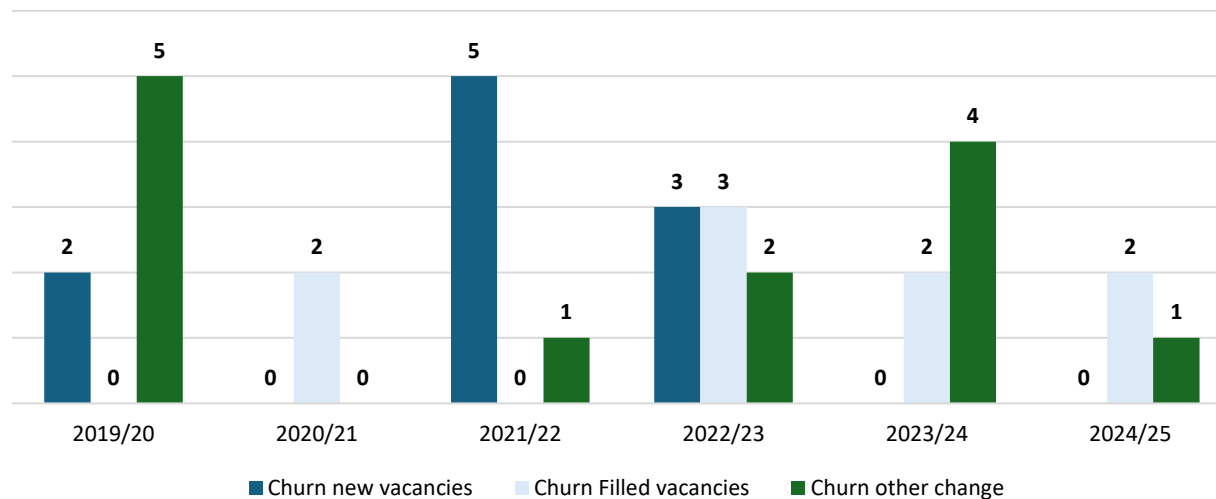


Chart 5: Breakdown of Business Churn, 2019-2025



For the second year in a row, no new vacant premises were identified in 2025 in Broseley town centre. This compares with three in 2023 and five in 2022. Two previously vacant premises became occupied in 2025.

A third of change (just one business) was attributable to other change, which involves a public house changing its name.

Comparison Retail

18% of commercial units are dedicated to the comparison retail category, accounting for 12% of gross floor space. This equates with eight stores with over 500m² of floor space. The amount and variety of comparison retail in Broseley is low, and clearly the town is not a main comparison retail destination. The proximity of the main shopping centres in Telford in some way contributes to this. There was no change in the comparison offer in 2024 or 2025 with the exception of one store changing names (but not function) in 2024. The number of stores operating in this classification did increase by one in 2023, with the hardware store that had been closed for refurbishment the previous year having re-opened in half of its previous premises (the other half now being reclassified as residential).

Within the town there is gift shop, a pet shop, a pharmacy and a wedding dress retailer. Also operating are a second hand furniture store, a purveyor of memorials, the hardware store plus the latest addition (trading since the 2021 audit), a mobile store/vape shop.

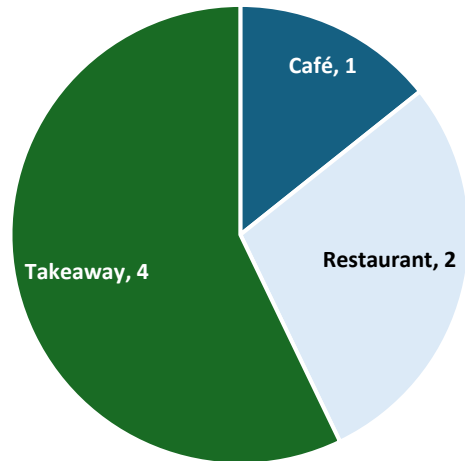
Convenience Retail

There are seven convenience stores within the main shopping area of Broseley. These account for 16% of all units and for 16% of gross floor space. As well as two general convenience stores (Spar and Select and Save), there is a butcher, a greengrocer and a newsagent. A new bakery opened in 2023, occupying a previously vacant premise. In 2025, a confectionery outlet opened, adding to the town's convenience retail offer.

There is also Co-op in Broseley, albeit outside the main shopping area zone. The main supermarket facilities for Broseley residents are located in nearby Telford.

Restaurants & Takeaways

Chart 6: Breakdown of Units in the Restaurant/Takeaway Sector, 2025



The number of operators in the restaurant and takeaway sector rose by one to seven in 2025 with the opening of a new restaurant. This is the equivalent of 16% of all units in the town and for 11% of floor space. The relatively high proportion of units attributable to takeaways (as opposed to cafes or restaurants) contributes to the low share of commercial space. There is just one café and two restaurants trading as well as four takeaways.

There are no chain stores in the restaurant and takeaway category in Broseley.

Tourism & Leisure

Also within the hospitality sector, there are five public houses. These take up approximately 730m² gross floor space. This represents an increase of one since the 2023 audit but there was no change in 2025. There is also an hotel and a B&B. One of the public houses also offers accommodation. The tourism & leisure classification is over-represented in Broseley.

Finance & Business Services

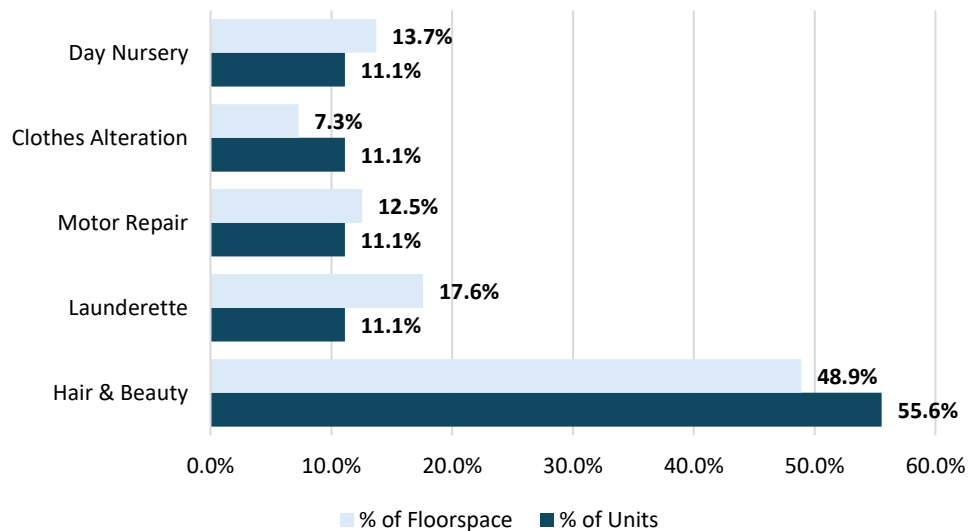
There are three commercial operators in the finance, professional and business services sector in Broseley town centre, accounting for just over 300m² of gross floor space. There was no change in the offer in 2024 or 2025. Included within this classification are two estate agents (including a letting agent) and a solicitor. A financial advisor ceased trading in the town between the 2022 and 2023 audits. There are no banks or building societies.

Retail Services

There are nine retail service businesses operating in Broseley town centre, with these accounting for over 850m² of gross floor space. There are more retail service providers than any other classification accounting for a fifth of the total in 2025. There is a concentration of operators in the barber and hair salon classification, with these together representing 55.6% of units and for almost half of floor space. There is one barber and four unisex or ladies' hair salons.

In addition, there is a motor repair outlet, a launderette and a store offering clothing alterations. The latter was rebranded in 2023—this was the only change in the retail services offer over the last three years with the exception of the opening of a day care nursery in 2024 in what was previously a vacant premise.

Chart 7: Breakdown of Retail Services by Type, 2025



Health

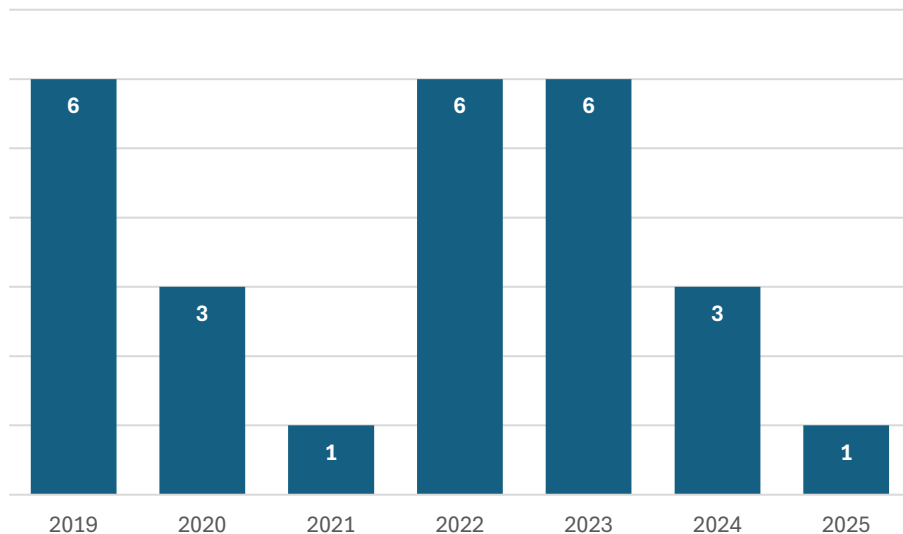
A dentist has a practice within the main retail streets of Broseley.

Vacant Units

In 2021, there was just one vacant unit in Broseley, located on Delphside. This represented a decline from 3 units in 2020 and from 6 in 2019. By 2022, the number had risen back up to six, although two of these stores were just closed on a temporary basis for refurbishment and have since re-opened. The number of vacancies remained at six in 2023, but reduced by three in 2024 and by a further two in 2025, leaving unoccupied commercial space at its lowest level since 2021.

It should be noted that some units that were classified as vacant in 2019, plus one in 2023, have since been repurposed as residential homes and as such are no longer classified as commercial. The 2025 vacancy rate of 2.2% is amongst the lowest in Shropshire, and it is significantly lower than the national average, which stood at 13.5% in the third quarter of 2025 according to BRC (data relating to high streets only).

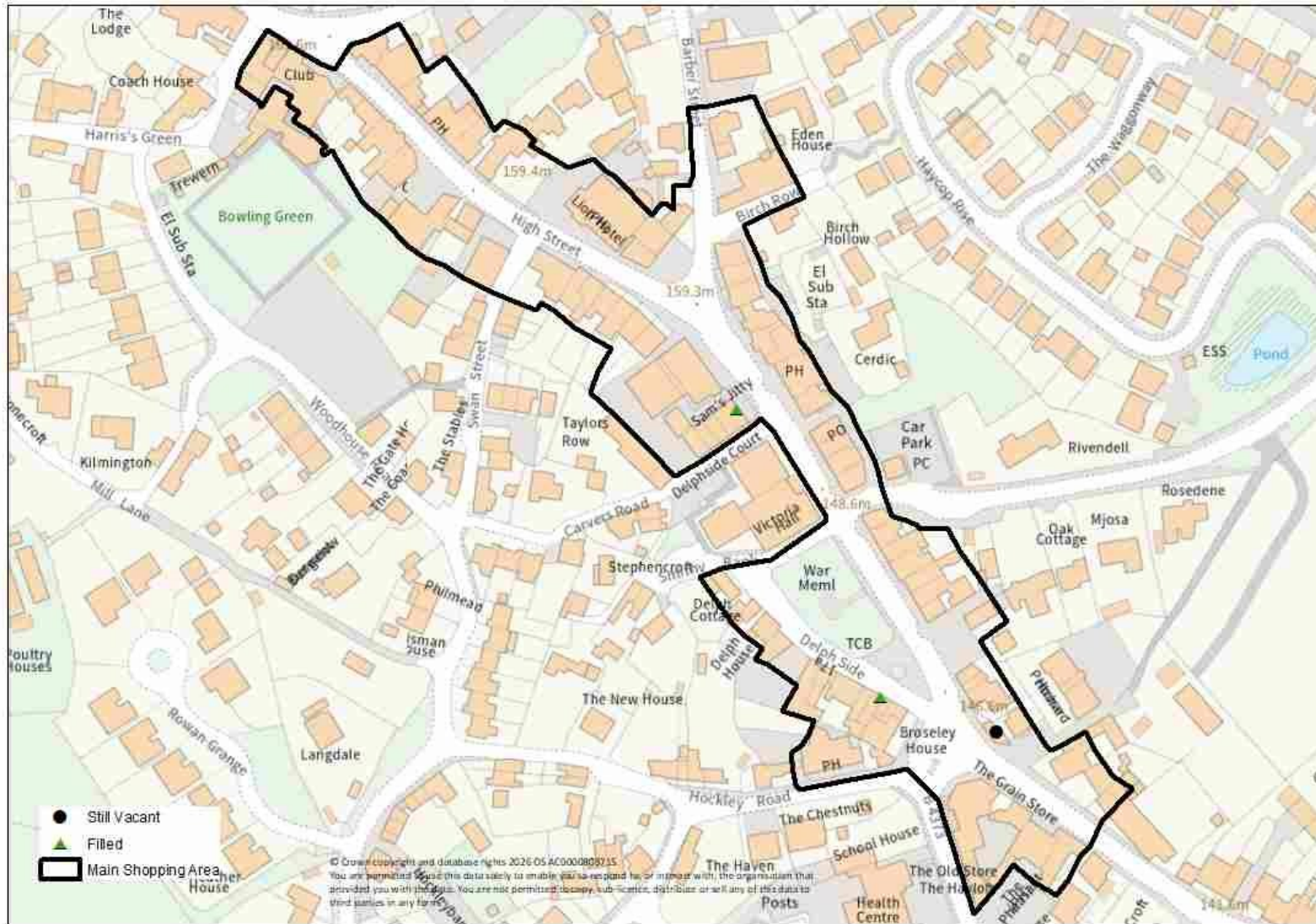
Chart 8: Number of Vacant Units, 2019—2025



The one vacant premise in Broseley is located on the High Street, and has been empty since 2022.

The one vacant premise in Broseley in 2025 had also been vacant in the preceding three years. Two premises which were vacant in 2024 had become occupied by the 2025 audit.

Map 6: Change in Location of Vacant Commercial Premises, 2024-2025



Residential Premises

The main shopping streets of Broseley comprise a mix of residential and commercial premises. In total, 86 residential premises are located in the audit area, of which the majority are flats (47 or 55%) which are largely located above retail or other commercial outlets. This stock is primarily along the High Street. There are also 24 terraced houses, also principally along the High Street. There are 8 detached and 7 semi-detached properties in the audit area. The number of residential premises in the area has remained stable despite the conversion of a number of commercial premises into residential properties since 2019, suggesting that some former homes are no longer in use.

Map 7: Location of Residential Premises in Broseley Town Centre

Chart 9: Breakdown of Residential Properties by Type

