



- AR is increasing our lobbying and PR effort for changes in planning policy, so we are stepping up our research to provide a strong supporting evidence base.
- Three new pieces of research are planned to support submissions to the DCLG, the Treasury and other economic departments demonstrating the importance of our sector's contribution to the economy and to customers.
- The first will conclude our research on town centres seeking to understand the drivers behind the success or otherwise of town centres and to what degree out of town retail influences town centre success.
- Part 1 was completed in 2008, identifying the factors which affect the performance of town centres and discussing what key factors make a centre successful and the principal factors which appear to adversely affect them.
- Part 2 will undertake in-depth case studies to illustrate the ingredients of successful centres and the factors likely to inhibit their success, especially what the effects of out-of-centre development have been on different towns.
- The second piece of research will refresh the audit we undertook in 2004 of the contribution the sector makes to the economy, retailing and the property sector. We need a concise statement of the size and importance of our sector which can be given to MPs, officials and others we wish to influence.
- Among the statistics to be refreshed, will be: the value of the property investments made in retail parks and warehouses; the proportion these make of the overall assets held by pension funds; the number of people employed in the sector; changes in the efficiency of retail warehouse floor space; and the contribution of the sector to overall retail sales.
- Third, we will publish the second 'Accessible Retail/Experian Annual Review of the Retail Warehouse and Parks Sector'. This tracks growth in GDP, employment, investment and improvements in efficiency and competitiveness secured by the sector providing time series data showing the continuing importance and growing contribution made by our sector to the economy.
- Alongside these further initiatives, we will retain the capacity to commission further research if any unforeseen issues arise during the year which require a response from AR and we will continue our campaign for action to amend the legislation based constraints and demands which impact on our ability to trade profitably and grow the industry.

For further information please look at our web site:  
[www.accessibleretail.co.uk](http://www.accessibleretail.co.uk)