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The role of market towns in the economy of the East Midlands

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Project Objectives

1. Exploring the roles of ‘secondary centres’ in regional economic development terms
2. Developing a framework and typology which enables these centres to be classified, and their roles and contributions to economic development to be assessed.
3. Developing a guide to policymaking and decision-making, which will enable different types of centre to contribute to regional economic development in the most effective ways.

Approach

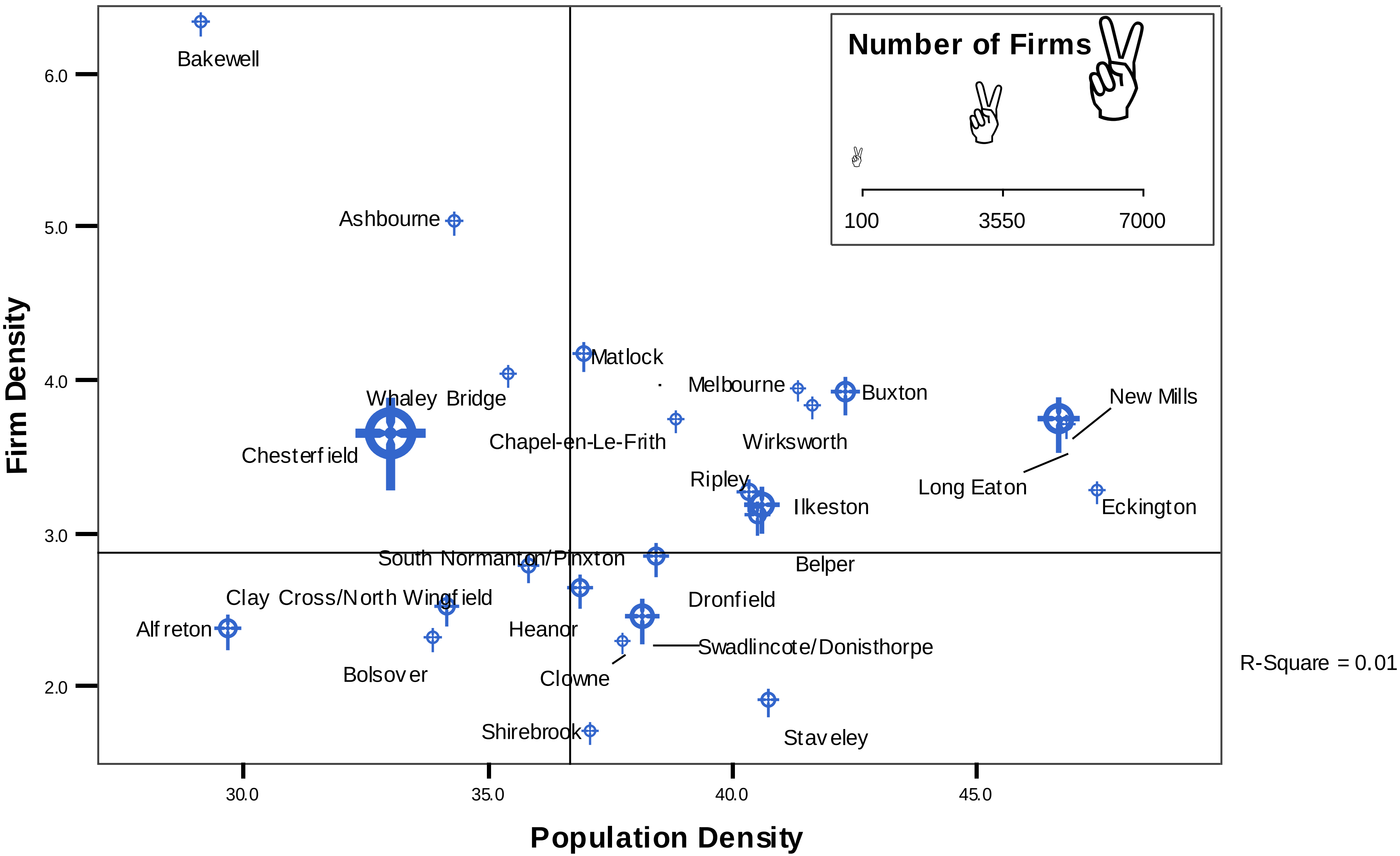
- Includes towns below ‘Principal Urban Area’ level in the region, from 70,260 to 1,965 population
- Analysis of variables at census urban area level, including the IDBR 2007 and Census 2001
- Regression analysis of variables, and location quotients developed to enable centres to be compared
- Interviews at district, county and town level to explore perceptions of towns, economic development strategies, and test the typology
- Case studies to illustrate each ‘type’ of town and the opportunities and challenges they face
- Identification of policy implications and potential interventions for each ‘type’ of town

Data Sources

- **Population Density:** resident population divided by total area, measured in hectares (Census 2001)
- **Firm Density:** number of firms divided by total area, measured in hectares (IDBR 2007)
- **Economic Activity:** the ‘economically active population’ (employed, self-employed, unemployed, and students) as a proportion of total adult population (Census 2001)
- **Connectivity:** distance to the nearest city, airport and London. Measured using number of miles, total journey time in minutes, and miles per minute to reflect efficiency of the journey (AA, National Rail)
- **Other measures:** jobs density, businesses with 20+ employees, business premises vacancy rate (NOMIS, ONS)

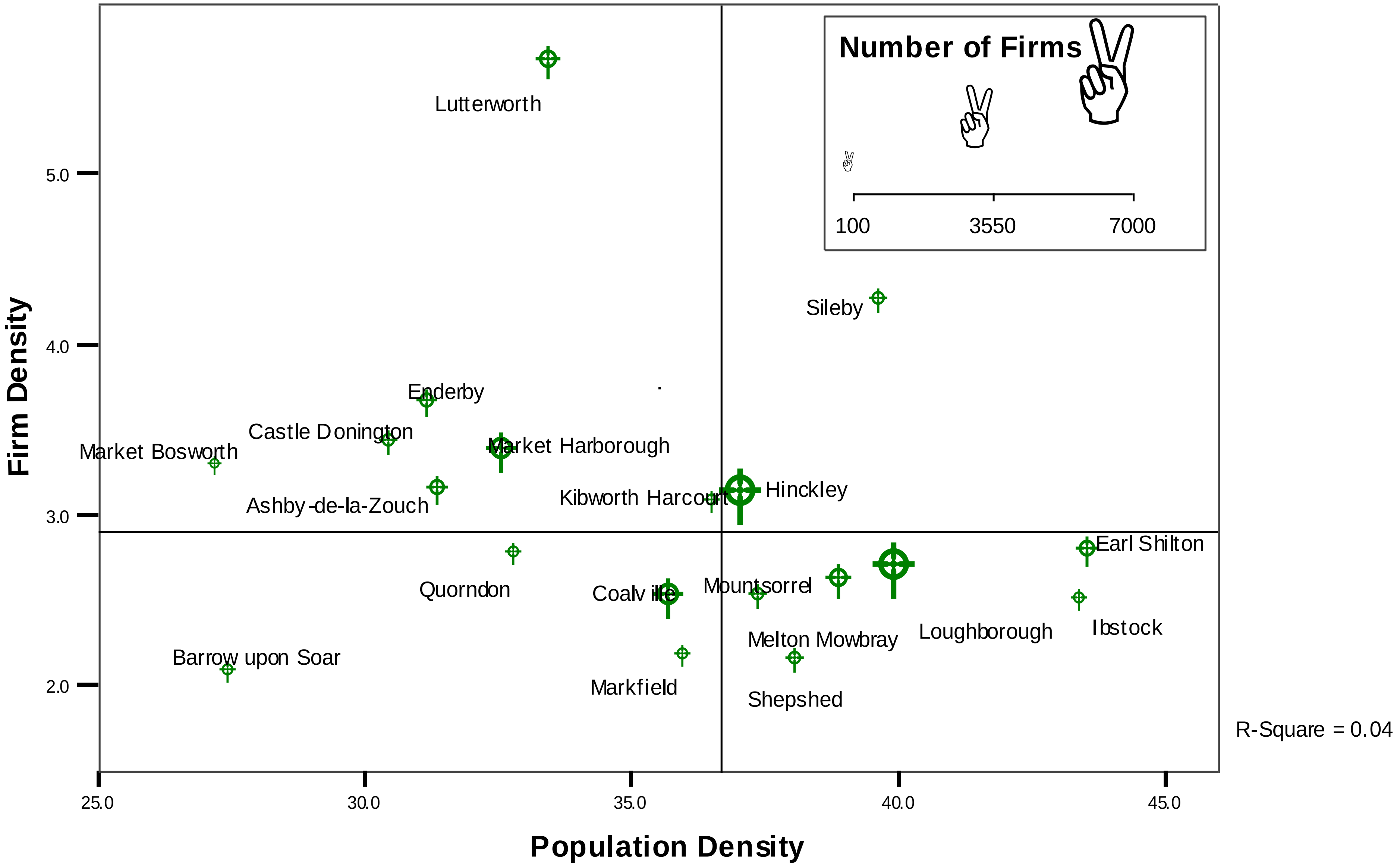
1.The Sub-Regional Picture

Derbyshire

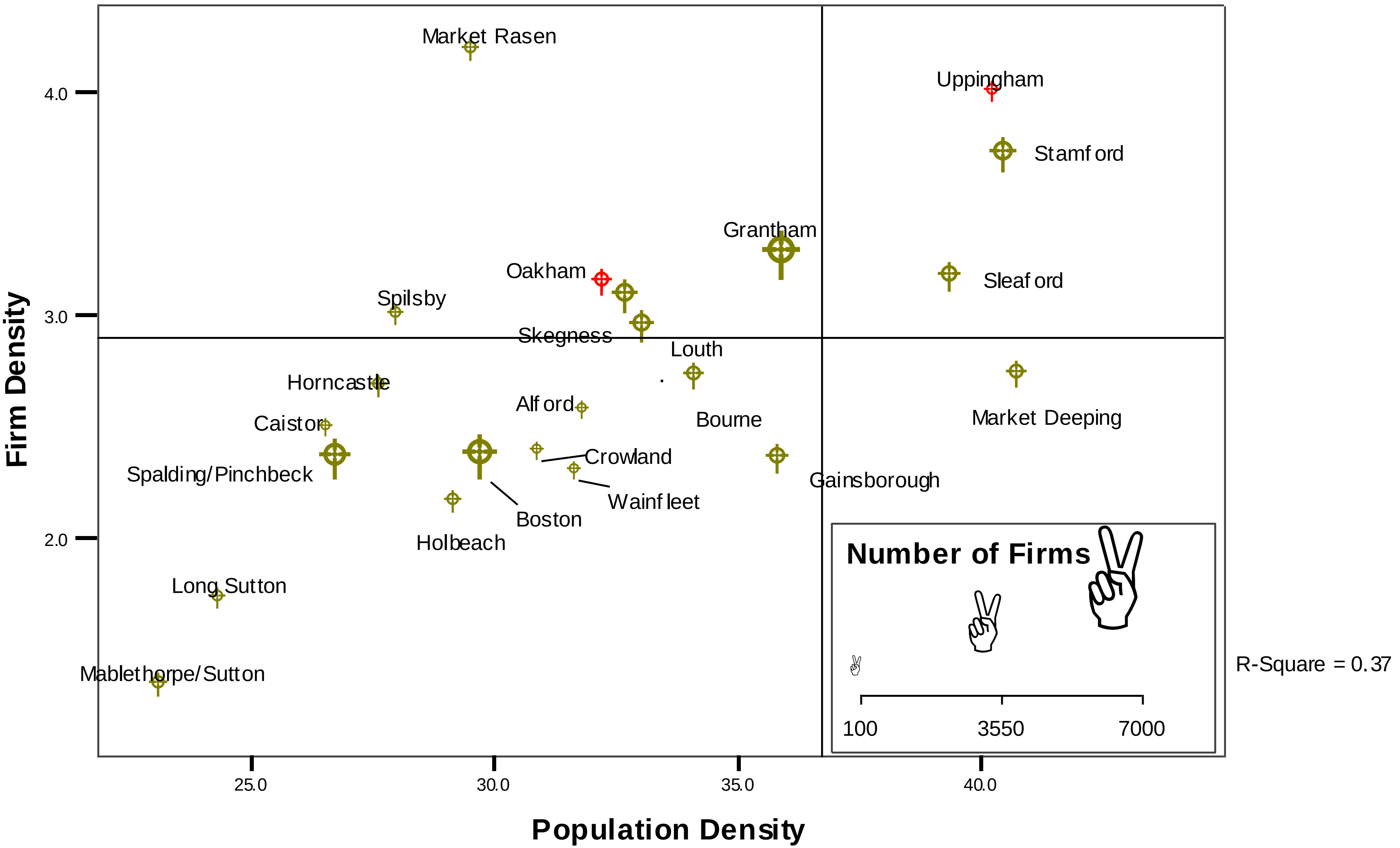


Number of Firms
100
3550
7000
Bakewell
Ashbourne
Matlock
Melbourne
Buxton
New Mills
Whaley Bridge
Chesterfield
Chapel-en-Le-Frith
Wirksworth
Ripley
Ilkeston
Long Eaton
Eckington
South Normanton/Pinxton
Belper
Clay Cross/North Wingfield
Dronfield
Alfreton
Heanor
Swadlincote/Donisthorpe
Bolsover
Clowne
Shirebrook
Staveley
R-Square = 0.01
6.0
5.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
30.0
35.0
40.0
45.0
Firm Density
Population Density

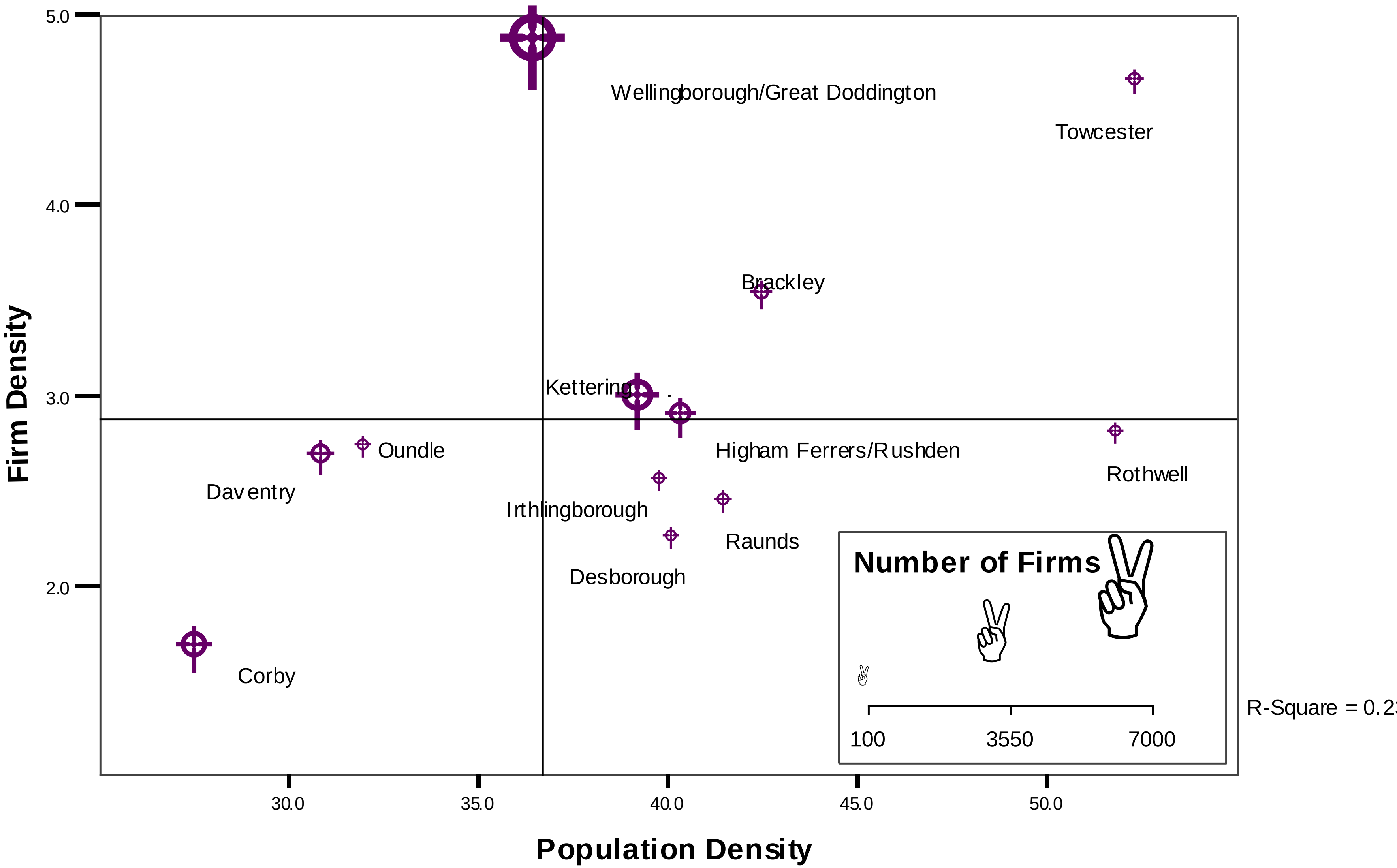
Leicestershire



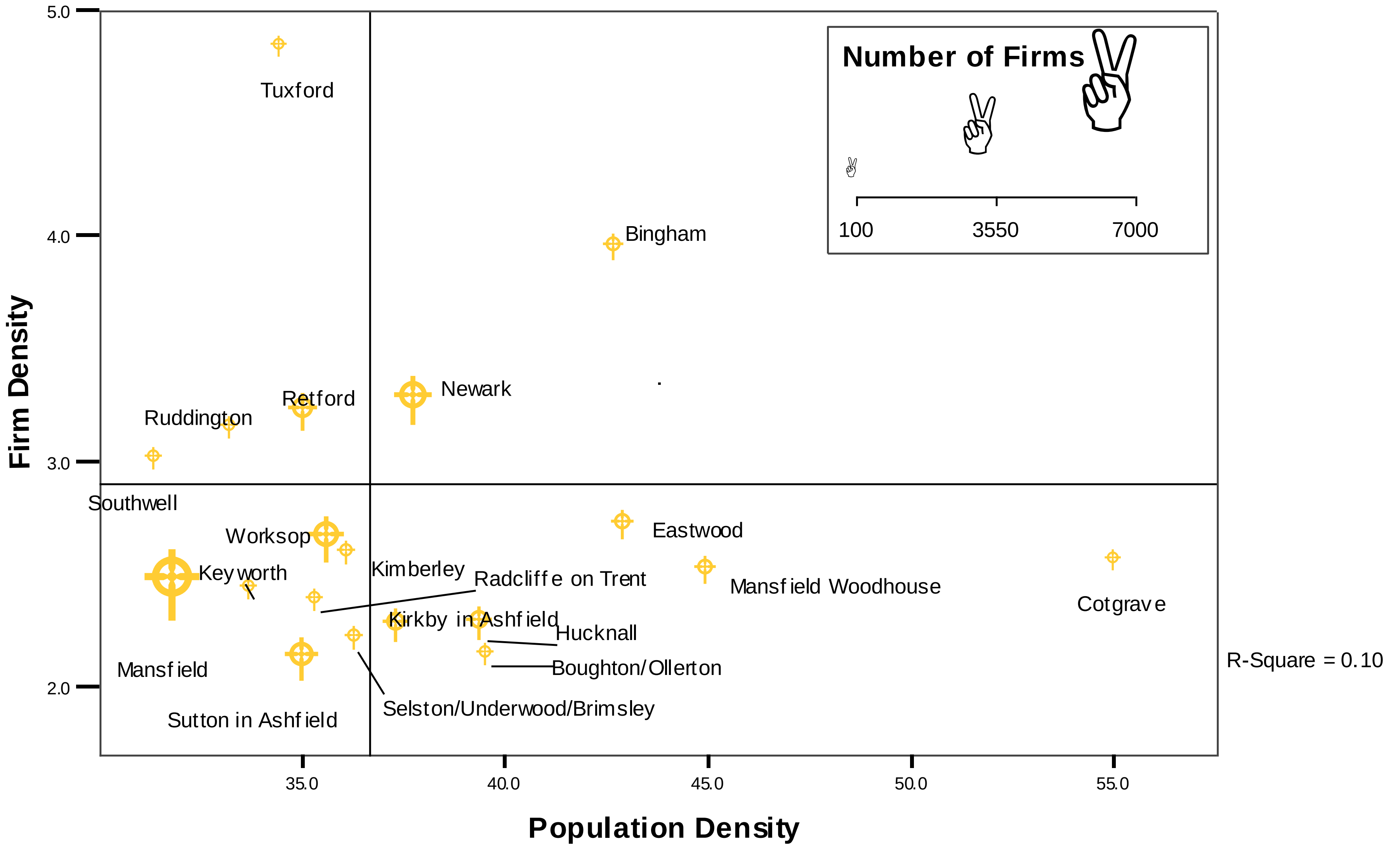
Lincolnshire and Rutland



Northamptonshire



Nottinghamshire



2. Connectivity

Most and Least Connected to Cities

Most

Urban Centre	County	Nearest City	Minutes	Miles	Mins/Mile
Dronfield	Derbyshire	Sheffield	11.0	6.8	1.6
Ruddington	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham	12.0	5.7	2.1
Radcliffe on Trent	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham	12.0	7.0	1.7
Clifton	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham	13.0	5.7	2.3
Kibworth Harcourt	Leicestershire	Leicester	13.0	8.4	1.6

Least

Urban Centre	County	Nearest City	Minutes	Miles	Mins/Mile
Boston	Lincolnshire	Lincoln	52.0	36.1	1.4
Alford	Lincolnshire	Lincoln	57.0	38.5	1.5
Skegness	Lincolnshire	Lincoln	60.0	42.5	1.4
Wainfleet	Lincolnshire	Lincoln	70.0	48.4	1.5
Mablethorpe/Sutton	Lincolnshire	Lincoln	72.0	46.0	1.6

Connectivity – Summary

- **Few truly remote centres:** most towns are within 20 miles of a city, 50 miles of an airport and 2 hrs of London
- **Least efficient journey times:** for secondary centres closest to three cities area and particularly Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire
- **Most efficient journey times:** Despite long distances between rural areas of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire and nearest cities, the journey times are more efficient
- **Connectivity to London and nearby Cities:** For some centres in Northamptonshire, the journey time to London and the nearest city is similar (50-60 minutes). With journey times of over 120 minutes, London is likely to be less relevant to centres in Derbyshire, some of which have journey times of less than 30 minutes to Sheffield and Manchester.
- **Few secondary centres remote *and* with inefficient journey times:** these include Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Spalding, Louth

3. Towards a Typology of Secondary Centres

Typology of Secondary Centres

Sub Regional Centres: large centres with a diverse economic base; the key secondary centres in the East Midlands, e.g. Chesterfield, Newark, Wellingborough

Manufacturing/Transition Economies: centres traditionally associated with manufacturing or mining and that still have a strong manufacturing sector, e.g. Corby, Mansfield, Worksop

Strong Local Economies: small centres with a high number of firms, and that serve a wide hinterland, e.g. Bakewell, Louth, Retford

Healthy Town Economies: centres that are well served, with services for the town and its immediate surrounding population, e.g. Towcester, Bingham

Dependent/Commuter Centres: well connected centres with high numbers in employment, but with few employment sites and sometimes services, e.g. Shepshed, Clifton, Rushden

Centres without Critical Mass: centres primarily in remote rural or former mining areas with insufficient numbers of residents or firms to bring about agglomeration effects, e.g. Shirebrook, Alford

	Common Challenges	Potential Responses
Sub Regional Centres	•Retaining a mixed and diverse economy •Ensuring continued provision of employment sites •Congestion and the costs of transport	•Tailored development strategies to build on existing strengths in the economy •Strategies to minimise congestion to maximise agglomeration effects
Manufacturing Transition Economies	•Decline in manufacturing and mining •Low levels of labour market participation •High levels of deprivation •Low skills and aspirations, lack of enterprise culture •Low number of SMEs	•Foster enterprise culture through tailored training and initiatives •Provision of incubator centres to support early stage businesses •Attraction of high skilled, high wage employment
Strong Local Economies	•Changing agricultural & tourism patterns •Remoteness/poor transport infrastructure •Ageing population •Lack of available/affordable housing •Limited employment sites •Loss or consultation of govt services •Limited business support	•Initiatives to encourage innovation in agriculture and tourism businesses •Support mid-life and early retiree entrepreneurship •Support for home-based businesses and home working •Explore innovative ways to deliver business support in remote centres

	Common Challenges	Potential Responses
Healthy Town Economies	•Competition from or 'leakage' to nearby retail centres •Demand for housing and its effective integration •Provision and retention of employment sites •Retaining a balanced and mixed economy	•Tailored and specific strategies to support business development and retention •Ensure town integrated and embedded into local community via good transport links •Dedicated resource for town centre to ensure relevance/vitality
Commuter/ Dependent Centres	•Loss of employment sites to housing •New housing not always integrated •Decline in retail & government services •Loss of community engagement and identity •Reliance on cars, and problems of congestion	•Ensure new housing development planned appropriately to give access to and support for local services •Dedicated resource for town centres and ensuring their relevance and vitality •Ensure access to govt services for those without access to transport
Centres without Crtiical Mass	•Decline in agriculture and mining workforce •Remoteness and/or poor access •Low levels of labour market participation and high levels of ill health •Loss of services to larger centres	•Growth in housing to 'consolidate' the fabric of the centre and improve demand for and viability of services •Promotion of broadband to increase accessibility of services and promote remote working

Strong Local Economy: Louth

- Lincolnshire market town with 16,000 population
- 50 minutes drive from Lincoln, 20 minutes from Grimsby
- Traditional role as centre for agricultural trade, and location of last livestock market in Lincolnshire
- Service centre for a wide hinterland, including nearby market towns of Alford and Spilsby
- Mixture of independent shops, market three times a week, range of larger firms on industrial estate
- Remote location and poor public transport
- Decline in government services, e.g. police, hospital
- Plans to promote the town for walking, food, eco tourism

Commuter/Dependent Centre: Shepshed

- Leicestershire town with over 14,000 population
- Near to M1 motorway, 5 miles west of Loughborough
- Associated with wool and textiles industries, which closed in mid 1990s
- Former employment land developed into housing
- Well placed for commuting to Loughborough, Coalville, Derby
- Population growth (6,500 residents in 1963)
- Well served for healthcare and schools
- Decline in banks, pubs, shops, weekly market
- Concern for community identity and cohesion

Thank you for listening

Any Questions?