

**REPORT ON
THE SEEND PARISH BUSINESS SURVEY**

SEEND PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

February 2017

REPORT ON THE SEEND PARISH BUSINESS SURVEY

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Introduction

1. We (The Seend Neighbourhood Planning Group) have been undertaking a study into the various aspects of the Seend Neighbourhood Plan. An important part of this plan has been to undertake a survey of the businesses based in Seend Parish. The objectives of the survey were to identify:
 - a. the **nature** and size of businesses in Seend Parish
 - b. the **number** of people working in Seend Parish based businesses
 - c. the **type** of premises used in Seend Parish for business
2. We issued a questionnaire in October 2016 to 65 identified businesses. We apologise if we have omitted anyone. Of these questionnaires, 54 were issued by e-mail and 11 were delivered by hand. A reminder was sent by e-mail to all those (with e-mail addresses) who had not responded and a further reminder was included in the December edition of spotlight. Eleven questionnaires were completed and returned – a 17% response rate. The results of the survey are based on the eleven responses received. This means that the results cannot accurately reflect results for the whole population of businesses identified.

Acknowledgements

3. We appreciate the time and effort put in by those business representatives in completing the survey and for their useful additional comments and suggestions. We also thank Bob McCulloch for his help in designing the questionnaire, analysing the results and for contributing to this report.

The results

4. In Appendix 1, there will occasionally be totals which seem to disagree with the number of questionnaires received. For example, question 1 asks about business types; the total is 13 (not 11). The reason for this is that a particular business (or some businesses) will have more than one business type. The same thing applies to questions 2, 5 and 7. In the following paragraphs. We have stated actual numbers and – where appropriate - percentages. All relevant percentages can be seen in Appendix A.
5. There will sometimes be a different number of categories in the results compared with those in the questionnaire. For example, in question 1, there are nine specified business types. The results show only five (excluding two submitted under the 'Other' category). The reason for this is that those that do not appear do not apply to any business. There may also be different categories shown – this is because such categories were included under 'Other' in the questionnaire.

Business types

6. The largest business type is agriculture – 5 out of 13 (38%). Next comes manufacturing and storage & distribution (15% each). Retail, services, creative industry interiors and the community centre make up the remainder.

Occupancy status

7. Six respondents (43%) own their business premises. Four premises are rented and four businesses are operated from home (29% each).

Importance of the internet

8. Of eleven businesses, nine (82%) use the internet a lot and two find the internet not essential.

Main business base

9. All the business that replied are based in Seend Parish.

The main reason why a business is based in Seend Parish

10. Five business were home-based (36%). Two are based in Seend Parish (14%) because the proprietor lives locally. Other reasons (one each) are:
 - a. deliver/collection access
 - b. comparative costs
 - c. land based
 - d. taking over family business
 - e. suitable site
 - f. to serve the community
 - g. local connection

Number of people in the business

11. Amongst all respondents, the number of people in the businesses are 62 full time and 12 part time.

Proportion of staff living in Seend Parish

12. In five of the businesses, all those working in the business live in Seend Parish; these include volunteers. In three business, none of the staff lives in Seend Parish. The number of businesses where 50%-74% and 25%-49% live in the Parish are 1 and 2 respectively. In the case of the 25%-49%, this includes 40% casual bar staff.

Plans to extend the business

13. Two businesses(18%) have plans to extend; nine do not.

Is expansion limited by access to relevant skills

14. Seven businesses reported that access to relevant skills was not a reason to limit expansion.

Where expansion is planned, will this mean new premises or expanding existing ones?

15. Of the two businesses planning to extend, one will need new premises. One finds that current premises hopefully will meet their needs – if not, new premises will be needed.

Area of additional space required

16. One business will require over 1000sq.ft.

Will expansion stay within Seend Parish?

17. In one case, expansion will hopefully stay within the Parish. If not, there are limited options – possibly Melksham or Devizes.

Reasons why expansion will not stay within Seend Parish

18. This question was irrelevant, considering paragraph 17 above.

Utilities/services used

19. All businesses identified use telephone landlines, electricity supply and water supply. Nine (82%) use broadband and mobile phone reception. Eight (73%) use roads within the Parish. Seven (64%) use waste disposal and two (18%) use public transport.

Utilities/services needing improvement

20. The following need improvement (number of business in brackets):
- a. Mobile phone reception (6)
 - b. Broadband (5)
 - c. Roads within the Parish (3)
 - d. Public transport (2)

- e. Telephone lines (2)
- f. Waste disposal (1)

Additional services identified as needing improvement were:

- g. Better speed limit enforcement (1)
- h. Use the Post Office or we will lose it (1)

Can you recruit enough with the necessary skills for your business?

21. Seven businesses (78%) are able to find enough skilled people; two cannot find enough.

Reasons why skilled people can't be recruited

22. Two reasons were given:
- a. Nobody wants to work with pigs (1)
 - b. The Swindon effect (taken to mean the attraction of working in Swindon) (1)

Anything else to bring to our attention?

23. The following were submitted:
- a. Little demand for our local produce
 - b. Weight limit on the High Street
 - c. Housing for young families
 - d. Need a better village shop
 - e. More social housing
 - f. Encourage young families
 - g. Redirect HGVs from the High Street
 - h. Better enforcement of the speed limit
 - i. Village-wide Wi-fi service for visitors
 - j. WI Hall needs attention – suggestions:
 - i. Leisure centre
 - ii. Squash courts
 - iii. Fives courts
 - iv. Meeting place for societies

Summary

24. We would have liked a better response to the survey but we can only accept the data received. Amongst the eleven businesses that responded, the required information has been provided and those results are self-explanatory. In addition, however, they have added to the categories under

some headings, identified areas for improvement in a number of areas and have suggested solutions to some problems.