

## **ALVINGTON NDP**

### **BUSINESS SURVEY ANALYSIS SUMMARY**

Businesses were identified through websites, local knowledge and phone directory. Members of the Steering Group contacted businesses by phone, email, hard copy personally posted or face to face. The hard copy questionnaire was collected by the Steering Group member and also filled in during phone and face to face interviews.

The questionnaire was designed to find out:

#### 1. The Business information

Ownership of premises; length of time operating; number of employees and mode of transport to work.

#### 2. Infrastructure

Was the infrastructure adequate to run the business, specifically broadband, mobile phone, transport and roads?

There were also questions relating to how the infrastructure impacts on the business and plans for future expansion. There was also an opportunity for further comment.

Not all the questions were answered as some were not applicable or were left blank.

#### **1. The Business information**

Of the 92 businesses identified, 10 had closed; 3 were outside parish boundary; 4 were identified as dormant and 1 had moved outside the parish.

The majority are small businesses employing under 5 employees and sole traders offering a variety of services and trades e.g. Theatre Production Carpenter, Bespoke Catering, Special Effects Makeup (International). One pub has 13 employees.

In total there were 73 businesses who responded to the questionnaire.

Of the 73 respondents who answered the questions about their business:

53% own their premises while 22% have a lease. 3% have been operational for 1 year, 18% for 2-5 years, 15% for 6-10 years and 37% for more than 10 years.

Of the questions answered: 64 people are employed, 8 employees lived in Alvington, 14 employees travel 0-5miles, 7 employees travel 6-10 miles, 3 employees travel over 10 miles. 8 walk to work, 13 use a vehicle and 2 use public transport.

#### **2. Infrastructure**

All 73 respondents replied to Infrastructure questions:

45% said broadband was adequate and 53% inadequate.

34% said that mobile phone coverage was adequate and 66% inadequate.

A variety of mobile phone providers are used including BT, O2, Vodafone, EE, Tesco, Orange and THREE. The majority of respondents used Vodafone (16) and EE (28)

Comments regarding Broadband stated that it was very slow and often intermittent. Generally businesses need high speed broadband while comments state download speed is around 5mpbs. Where the business relied on technology this has had a negative effect with one respondent reporting they were changing their business.

Mobile phone comments stated that poor or in some cases no signal had affected business calls; different providers appeared to make no difference.

Comments regarding transport mainly concern the amount of traffic on the main A48, especially at rush hours, and the poor state of the road making their business less accessible.

**Some examples of the comments which illustrate the effect on their business:**

Mobile Phone - very poor, have to go up the hill to get a good reception. This makes communication with clients and workers, land line too expensive.

Broad band poor - drops out. We sell by online website so broadband is essential. Re: plans to change business - perhaps.

Broadband - loads of problems regularly goes down. Mobile phones - not very good

Wi-Fi is crucial to pub business - it makes our customers think about returning

There is Pay point, Lotto and a cash machine on site which all rely on internet signal to work. Sometimes the signal strength is too weak for these machines to operate meaning we therefore lose trade. We have tried various network providers for the sites internet service but still have problems and have regular visits from engineers to try and improve this. Mobile phone reception on all major networks is a problem, most of the time there is not a strong enough signal to even make a call let alone pick up 3G which seems non-existent in this area! Can't easily keep up with business emails. No phone calls and text.

Slow internet access sometimes unable to access bank and websites, emails etc.

Broadband service is very poor. BT say we can get up to 8 MBs but most of the time this is closer to 2 MBs! Mobile signal is also very bad.

Public transport available is virtually none.

A48, if you wish to get to Gloucester or get passed Chepstow in the morning, forget it!

Transport and road issues affects business - 'difficult in sales'

Roads - A48 has become much worse over the last 7 years. More commercial vehicles and they now start at 3 am whereas used to be 5 am.

*Ref: Alvington NDP business analysis 2018*