

Meriden Neighbourhood Plan Business Survey 2017 Results

1.0 Introduction

The Government has introduced The Localism Act to give residents and businesses more of a say in the development of their own parish. A key part of this is the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan by the local community and Meriden Parish Council, which will have legal status and will be used to influence future planning decisions for the parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan should also consider the on-going development and support of businesses that are naturally suited to this area. Businesses were therefore consulted by a questionnaire.

2.0 Methodology

The questionnaire was delivered to all known businesses in Meriden and they had eight weeks to complete it during June and July 2017. 21 out of 48 questionnaires were returned (43.75% response rate) and the responses to all questions and all comments follow in this brief report.

3.0 Summary of Results

- Two-thirds of businesses responding had been at the same address for more than 10 years.
- A third of the businesses employed between 21 and 50 people.
- 81% felt that transport links are suitable for those that have to travel.
- Two-thirds are able to fulfil their recruitment or apprenticeship needs local some of the time.
- Almost half of the businesses would give work experience to local 15 plus years old children.
- Six businesses could provide advice or mentor young entrepreneurs, with three able to provide work space for a short time for start-up businesses.
- Having local demand for their products or services is very important for three-quarters of businesses.
- Nine in ten felt that the availability of car parking is very or quite important.
- 42% said tourist-related activities contribute to their trade.
- On average businesses received on average 18 weekly deliveries by articulated vehicle and deliver 10 using the same methods.
- Six businesses felt traffic in the area was a problem that affected their business.
- Four businesses thought the junction of the M42 and A45 was a problem that affected their business.

- Nine businesses were likely to require additional space over the next 10 years. There was a mixture of space requirements when prompted.
- Over the next 10 years, four felt they would need larger premises in Meriden Parish, one smaller premises and one consider moving out the area.
- Two businesses with connection to the local land have noticed a change in their ability to work the land.
- In relation to services/utilities to their business, 76% said the mobile signal was fairly or very poor, 60% said the same of broadband and 37% felt the same way about public transport. The electrical supply was the highest rated service or utility at 70% very or fairly good.
- Given a list of employment types respondents were asked which should be encouraged. 12 went for the tourism and leisure sector, 10 shops and offices, and nine for those related to community services.
- Nine businesses believed the Neighbourhood Plan should encourage more land for employment purposes and three felt it should not. The type of land that should be allocated for this was felt to be brownfield sites for eight businesses and six felt existing buildings should be utilised.
- Five businesses believed existing employment sites should be protected from change of use, five said no and nine did not know.

4.0 Results in Full

Q1	What type of business do you have?			
	Retail	3 (16%)	Non-Retail.....	16 (84%)

Q2	In order to demonstrate that public consultation is representative of our community, would you please tick the boxes that best describe the nature of your business?			
	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	2 (10%)	Repair of vehicles	1 (5%)
	Energy & Water	2 (10%)	Transport & Storage	1 (5%)
	Manufacturing	1 (5%)	Finance & insurance	1 (5%)
	Construction	2 (10%)	Real Estate Activities	2 (10%)
	Public House, Hotels & restaurants	3 (14%)	Administration & Support services	2 (10%)
	Public Services, Education & Health	4 (19%)	Arts, Entertainment & recreation	1 (5%)
	Professional, Scientific & Technical	0 (0%)	Social Enterprise	0 (0%)
	Voluntary, Charity, Non Profit making	2 (10%)	Other	6 (29%)
	Wholesale & retail trade	1 (5%)		
	If Other, please specify here - 5 mentions in Appendix			

Q3	How many years has your business been at this address?			
	Less than 1 year	2 (10%)	4 to 10 years	4 (19%)
	1 to 3 years	1 (5%)	More than 10 years	14 (67%)

Q4	How many people are employed by the Business?							
	Just 1	2 (11%)	3-5	3 (16%)	11-20	4 (21%)	More than 50	1 (5%)
	2	0 (0%)	6-10	3 (16%)	21-50	6 (32%)		

Q5	Where do the people employed in your business live? Number	
	In Meriden Parish	14
	Balsall Common	8
	Berkswell	8
	Coventry	12
	Solihull	8
	Birmingham	8
	Elsewhere	10
	Elsewhere (please specify) 10 responses in Appendix	

Q6	Are transport links suitable for those who have to travel?			
	Yes	17 (81%)	No.....	4 (19%)

Q7	Are you able to fulfil your recruitment or apprenticeship needs locally?					
	Yes all of the time.....	5 (26%)	None of the time.....	1 (5%)	Some of the time...	13 (68%)

Q8	Would you give work experience to local 15+ years old children?		
	Yes	9 (47%)	No..... 10 (53%)

Q9	Could you provide advice or mentor young entrepreneurs or even provide work space for a short time for start-up businesses?		
		Yes	No
	Entrepreneurs	6 (30%)	14 (70%)
	Start-up	3 (17%)	15 (83%)
Q10	How can the environmental impact of your business be reduced with the help of villagers, for instance reduced travelling times by employing local people, direct sales to locals, etc?		
	11 comments in Appendix		

Q11	How important are the following factors for your business based in Meriden?				
		Very important	Quite Important	Not important	N/A
	Home based business	2 (13%)	4 (25%)	2 (13%)	8 (50%)
	Local demand for products and/or services	14 (74%)	2 (11%)	1 (5%)	2 (11%)
	Owner lives locally	5 (28%)	4 (22%)	6 (33%)	3 (17%)
	Public transport access	7 (37%)	3 (16%)	7 (37%)	2 (11%)
	Delivery/collection access	7 (39%)	6 (33%)	3 (17%)	2 (11%)
	Availability of car parking	9 (50%)	7 (39%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)
	Cost compared with other locations	5 (38%)	2 (15%)	2 (15%)	4 (31%)
	If there are other reasons, please write in the box below – 2 comments in Appendix				

Q12	Do tourist related activities contribute to your trade?		
	Yes	8 (42%)	No..... 11 (58%)

Q13	How many average <u>weekly</u> deliveries do you <u>receive</u> via the following methods?	
	By car	2.5
	Transit or similar	6.3
	7.5 tonne	9.1
	15 tonne	4.3
	Articulated vehicle	17.9

Q14	How many average <u>weekly</u> deliveries do you <u>deliver</u> via the following methods?	
	By car	0.1
	Transit or similar	0.4
	7.5 tonne	0
	15 tonne	1.6
	Articulated vehicle	9.7

Q15	Is the traffic in the area a problem that affects your business?			
	Yes	6 (30%)	No.....	14 (70%)
	If yes, please explain below – 7 comments in Appendix			

Q16	Is the junction of the M42 and A45 a problem that affects your business?			
	Yes	4 (20%)	No.....	16 (80%)
	If yes, please explain below – 5 comments in Appendix			

Q17	What would help your business to develop and thrive during the next 10 years?			
	10 comments in Appendix			

Q18	Is your business likely to require additional space over the next 10 years?			
	Yes	9 (43%)	No.....	12 (57%)

Q19	If yes to Q18, how much space will you require?						
		Up to 50 sq. mtrs	51 to 100 sq. mtrs	101 to 200 sq. mtrs	201 or more sq. mtrs	Not sure	N/A
	Industrial workshop	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	2 (50%)
	Office	2 (29%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	3 (43%)
	Retail	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (25%)	3 (75%)
	Storage – covered	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)
	Storage – open	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
	Other	0 (0%)	2 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)

Q20	Is your business likely to require alternative or smaller premises over the next 10 years?			
		Yes	No	Not sure
	Larger premises in Meriden Parish	4 (22%)	9 (50%)	5 (28%)
	Smaller premises in Meriden Parish	1 (6%)	12 (67%)	5 (28%)
	Moving premises outside Meriden Parish	1 (6%)	10 (59%)	6 (35%)

Q21	If you have indicated in the previous question that you are moving premises outside Meriden Parish or are considering doing so, what are your reasons?			
	5 comments in Appendix			

Q22	Are there any planning constraints or barriers either locally or nationally that will or may prevent your business from developing during the next 10 years?			
	11 comments in Appendix			

Q23	What areas of Business Support do you access?							
	General Advice ..	3 (43%)	Funding	5 (71%)	Skills Training	4 (57%)	Other.	4 (57%)
	If other, please specify - 3 comments in Appendix							

Q24	What areas of Business Support would you like to access to help your business grow?
	7 comments in Appendix

Q25	If your business is connected to local land horticultural, agricultural, or similar, have you noticed a change in the ability to work the land?				
Yes	2 (11%)	No	6 (33%)	N/A.....	10 (56%)
	If yes, please explain in the box below - 2 comments in Appendix				

Q26	Please rate the following services/utilities in relation to your business?				
	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor
Drainage	5 (26%)	6 (32%)	5 (26%)	1 (5%)	2 (11%)
Sewage	4 (21%)	7 (37%)	3 (16%)	1 (5%)	4 (21%)
Waste Disposal	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)
Public Transportation	1 (5%)	4 (21%)	7 (37%)	6 (32%)	1 (5%)
Land Telephone Lines	2 (10%)	11 (55%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	3 (15%)
Electrical Supply	7 (35%)	7 (35%)	3 (15%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)
Mobile Signal	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	3 (14%)	5 (24%)	11 (52%)
Broadband	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	8 (40%)
	Please make any additional comments about the service/utilities above - 9 comments in Appendix				

Q27	Which of the following types of employment should be encouraged?		
Tourism, leisure and crafts	12 (71%)	Pubs, restaurants and cafes.....	8 (47%)
Transport, storage & distribution.....	4 (24%)	Financial and professional services	5 (29%)
Community Services (Council services, medical services, sports facilities, etc) ..	9 (53%)	IT & High Tech.....	6 (35%)
Shops and offices.....	10 (59%)	Other.....	2 (12%)
Industrial and manufacturing	5 (29%)		
	If other, please specify here - 1 mention in Appendix		

Q28	Should the Neighbourhood Plan encourage more land for employment purposes?				
Yes	9 (45%)	No.....	3 (15%)	Don't know.....	8 (40%)

Q29	If yes to the previous question, which types of land should be allocated for employment purposes?		
Existing Buildings	6 (67%)	Brownfield land (previously developed)	8 (89%)
New identified land	5 (56%)	Other.....	2 (22%)
	If other, please specify here - 1 comment in Appendix		

Q30	Should existing employment sites be protected from change of use?				
Yes	5 (26%)	No.....	5 (26%)	Don't know.....	9 (47%)

Q31	What would encourage new businesses to locate to Meriden?
	9 comments in Appendix

Q32	Please make any other comments here on jobs and the local economy?
	2 comments in Appendix

APPENDIX

Q2	In order to demonstrate that public consultation is representative of our community, would you please tick the boxes that best describe the nature of your business? If Other, please specify here 5 mentions
	Wood Recycling
	Archery Club
	Quarrying
	Golf Club
	Golf Club

Q5	Where do the people employed in your business live? Elsewhere (please specify) 10 responses
	Leicester, Rugby, Dudley
	2 - North Warwickshire
	7
	3 - Warwickshire
	Sutton Coldfield - 1; London - 19
	Not employed as yet
	Nuneaton - 1
	Hereford
	0
	0

Q10	How can the environmental impact of your business be reduced with the help of villagers, for instance reduced travelling times by employing local people, direct sales to locals, etc? 11 comments
	Report any issues so we can address them promptly
	No construction vehicles allowed through villages and site rules
	We would like to recruit locally but it depends on correct skills. The Biomass steam system requires more skilled operatives than the composting part which is not yet built
	Not applicable due to skill base required
	The Pallington Estate is so diverse we find this answer very difficult
	Possible delivery of sandwiches or takeout food
	Already achieved with local enterprise and home working and flexible working arrangements
	Not sure
	n/a
	Local volunteers. Grass roots community business
	Use local suppliers

Q11	How important are the following factors for your business based in Meriden? If there are other reasons, please write in the box below 2 comments
	Improvements to the internet speed and availability would improve the attractiveness of the area to attract occupiers of commercial space
	Local stakeholders feedback to ensure community needs are being met

Q15	Is the traffic in the area a problem that affects your business? If yes, please explain below 7 comments
	Car parking space is insufficient to meet the needs of staff and customers
	Lorries can be held up if there are problems on A45/M42 etc.
	Speeding on Fillongley Roads. Car parking on roads + pavement, outside school
	Generally road system works well but increasingly busy
	The higher the volume of traffic increases speeding and pollution which results in more residents' complaints to handle and field. Parking also then becomes an issue
	Parking and lack of enforcement
	The speed limits throughout the village and surrounding roads are not being adhered to

Q16	Is the junction of the M42 and A45 a problem that affects your business? If yes, please explain below 5 comments
	Volume of traffic can slow deliveries, although our raw materials are sourced on the Meriden quarry site. Our water providers come from further afield
	Occasionally this junction is at capacity, particularly when the NEC has a large event and often at rush hours
	If there are hold ups HGV's and Artics will use rural road networks to cut through which increases capacity on rural highways not fit for purpose causing damage to highway and verges
	Not that I can qualify
	Cut through to avoid traffic at peak travel times. Busy crossings - makes unsafe for youngsters to access park

Q17	What would help your business to develop and thrive during the next 10 years? 10 comments
	More reserves
	Larger premises on the same site
	More local take up of services by local community
	We need a ? For our electricity but grid connection cost is currently £4m making it uneconomical - as long as ? are still operating, it should be ok
	Funding to improve the building & security - current lack of maintenance funds & decreasing budget
	Flexibility of town and country planning policies to allow businesses to adapt, expand to changing circumstances. Improvements to internet speed to remote locations
	Better access to a grid (electric) connection
	Increase level of funding. Joined up and partnership working with principal authority
	Larger population base. More businesses moving to the area
	Funding. Extend pitches available. Work with partners and local community

Q21	If you have indicated in the previous question that you are moving premises outside Meriden Parish or are considering doing so, what are your reasons? 1 comment
	Not moving premises necessarily, but probably an additional site elsewhere in Warwickshire/Birmingham area

Q22	Are there any planning constraints or barriers either locally or nationally that will or may prevent your business from developing during the next 10 years? 11 comments
	Permitted working hours constraints
	Listed building status and conservation area constraint changes needed to develop the business
	No
	We are awaiting a review from the Govt on its renewable energy strategy after 2021
	Green belt is far too restrictive, particularly around the village that should be able to accommodate expansion
	No
	Green belt
	No
	Possibly. I believe we struggle to get any permission here
	n/a
	Unsure

Q23	What areas of Business Support do you access? If other, please specify 3 comments
	Financial support
	Financial and legal professional support
	Professional and legal

Q24	What areas of Business Support would you like to access to help your business grow? 7 comments
	Government funding
	Apprentice training
	None
	Better mobile phone signals
	Funding, Employment, Legal
	Funding. Long term planning to sustain business via new Director appointments
	Skills training

Q25	If your business is connected to local land horticultural, agricultural, or similar, have you noticed a change in the ability to work the land? If yes, please explain in the box below 2 comments
	Drier years are leading to lower returns for our composting business
	This is an odd word but an answer in that the cost of farming means an increasingly ageing farming population and a lack of attractive opportunities for young people

Q26	Please rate the following services/utilities in relation to your business? Please make any additional comments about the service/utilities above 9 comments
	Ongoing problems with water supply
	The mobile signal is very poor around the village green area
	We could do with an IWM electricity export. Mobile phone signals are non-existent. We have no ? sewer connection and have to rely on septic tanks
	Mostly private systems - septic tanks, etc. Broadband speed to outlying buildings/homes is generally poor
	Mobile coverage is none existent
	The mobile phone signal is very bad for my business in Meriden
	Mobile signal non-existent at office base. No connectivity to superfast. Better support for rural business and communities required
	Broadband is appalling here less than 3mb makes business hard so we are having to research our own line
	New mobile mast required to provide adequate signal. Broadband unable to upgrade as not in Meriden exchange

Q27	Which of the following types of employment should be encouraged? If other, please specify here 1 mention
	All employment should be encouraged

Q29	If yes to the previous question, which types of land should be allocated for employment purposes? If other, please specify here 1 comment
	Former quarry/landfill sites

Q31	What would encourage new businesses to locate to Meriden? 9 comments
	Better transport/bus links; better bus services
	Better mobile. Advertising of transport links
	Increased transport links
	Public transport links/fast internet/broadband
	Not sure. Don't know the area too well
	Improved transport links. Improved mobile and broadband services. Highway infrastructure
	Better public transport. Better communications
	Improved transport links. Access to station - Hampton
	Lower rates

Q32	Please make any other comments here on jobs and the local economy? 2 comments
	To grow local economy will sustain the rural communities providing employment opportunities to local people. However there needs to be consideration of growth V. infrastructure particularly with new housing developments increasing travel and population
	More housing