

Wolston Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan

Business and Employment Survey 2019 Results

1. Introduction

The data collected from this survey will be used to inform a view of business and employment within the parish of Wolston, to support the Neighbourhood Plan.

The introduction of the Localism Act by the Government gives residents and businesses more of a say in the development of their own parish. We therefore need to understand the businesses within the parish of Wolston: the reasons they are located here, what would help to make them stay in the area and what their future needs might be. The Neighbourhood Plan will set out a Vision as to what the community will be like to live and work in to the period up to 2031, and about how that vision may be achieved.

Completing the Neighbourhood Plan is a complex and lengthy exercise but when approved the plan will have full legal force regarding all future planning decisions in Wolston especially those relating to business and housing developments.

This document summarises the results from the Business and Employment Survey.

2. Methodology

Towards the end of February 2019, all known businesses in Wolston received a Business Survey questionnaire with a covering letter and a FREEPOST envelope for the return of it to Stratford-on-Avon District Council, with a deadline of March 22nd, 2019. Stratford District Council was used as they were an independent body to process and analyse the questionnaires. Questionnaires were also available to be completed online.

34 responses were received within the timeframe allowed.

3. Summary of Results

- Most businesses were non-retail (85%).
- 6 businesses were in Education or Agricultural/horticultural.
- Almost half of businesses (47%) had been operating in Wolston for over 10 years.
- Half of businesses were carried out at offices or premises not owned by the business owner.
- Most businesses were small, with 60% employing 1-2 full time staff and 59% employing 1-2 part time staff.
- Just over half of businesses (54%) felt transport links were suitable.
- Most businesses felt parking and traffic were not a problem for their business, and were adequate within Wolston.
- Over half of businesses considered broadband to be poor or average.
- Over 80% businesses considered mobile phone signal to be poor or average.

- The top three priorities for investment in infrastructure were parking, broadband and the mobile phone signal.
- Over a third of businesses were experiencing problems due to rising costs; roads/customer parking and shortage of skilled staff were also problems for just under a third of businesses.
- 58% thought that high street shops/employment mix should be protected through Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- Most businesses used Wolston Post office, however, most also said that it did not fulfil their banking needs.
- The vast majority of businesses (94%) felt that Wolston Neighbourhood Plan should encourage business and commercial development that employed local people.
- Most businesses were in favour of all facilities for business except the development of large business parks, which most found unacceptable.
- 6 businesses said that they would be looking for larger premises within Wolston over the next 12 years; 5 businesses were likely to move to larger premises outside Wolston in this time.
- When asked what types of employment should be encouraged within Wolston, Shops and Offices and Tourism, Leisure & Crafts were the most popular choices.
- Just under six out of ten businesses (59%) felt that home-working should be encouraged.
- For those that did already work from home, a café/venue with Wi-Fi to meet with clients was the most popular improvement they would like to see.

4. Results

Q1 What type of business do you have?				
	5 (15%)	Retail	28 (85%)	Non-Retail

Q2 Please indicate the type of business that best describes what you do? (If you trade in more than one category, please tick all that apply)				
	6 (19%)	Education	1 (3%)	Real estate activities
	5 (16%)	Manufacturing	0 (0%)	Finance and insurance
	3 (9%)	Construction	0 (0%)	Wholesale supplier
	5 (16%)	Professional services	1 (3%)	Arts and recreation
	2 (6%)	Scientific or technical services	0 (0%)	Public house
	1 (3%)	Vehicle repair	0 (0%)	Café and catering trade
	6 (19%)	Agricultural or horticultural	4 (13%)	Voluntary, charity or non-profit making
	1 (3%)	Logistics and storage	3 (9%)	Tradesperson
	3 (9%)	IT and business services	4 (13%)	Other
	2 (6%)	Medical and health related		

Q3 How many years has your business operated in Wolston?					
	0 (0%)	Less than one year	14 (41%)	4 to 10 years	
	4 (12%)	1 to 3 years	16 (47%)	More than 10 years	

Q4 Is your business carried out from?	
17 (50%)	An office or business premises not owned by yourself
6 (18%)	Your own business premises
12 (35%)	Your home
0 (0%)	Other

Q5 How many people are employed by the business? (Tick one box per row)								
		Just 1	2	3 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 50	More than 50
Full-time		11 (41%)	5 (19%)	3 (11%)	5 (19%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
Part-time		7 (41%)	3 (18%)	5 (29%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Q6 As far as you know, approximately what percentage of your employees, including yourself, live in Wolston?						
	12 (40%)	0%	1 (3%)	4-25%	13 (43%)	51-100%
	3 (10%)	1-3%	2 (7%)	26-50%		

Q7 Approximately what percentage of staff come into work by the following methods?	
On foot	18.9%
Bicycle	0.4%
Motorbike	0.0%
Bus	4.7%
Car	65.8%
Other	14.3%

Q8 Are transport links suitable for those who have to travel?			
	14 (54%)	Yes	12 (46%) No
If No, how can travel links be improved? 8 responses:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently no bus stop close to our offices • The farm is 1 mile from the village and no bus service on the Fosse Way. Nearest bus stop is in the village • Public transport to Ryton Gardens would be beneficial - at present the university has to provide a shuttle bus for approximately 12 people each day from Coventry. • Bus stops closer to office/home • Coalpitt Lane to south side of Fosse Way not gritted in freezing weather • We would like to use more public transport but it is difficult as no buses go that near to our site • Difficult for clients to get here • Bus does not go to Ryton Gardens 			

Q9 Is the traffic or parking in Wolston a problem that affects your business?			
	7 (21%)	Yes	27 (79%) No
If yes, please explain below – 6 responses:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy congestion on Main St, near chapel • Not enough public parking for our customers • Parents driving down the school lane is dangerous • Road parking (on) in Wolston high Street hampers access from Brandon side of Coventry • More parking for customers and staff • Access for clients to the village can be difficult given the lack of public parking anywhere 			

Q10 Does your premises have sufficient parking space for those who come by car. This includes off-road parking included for staff and visitors?			
	28 (85%)	Yes	5 (15%) No

Q11 What is your opinion of the parking facilities in Wolston? (Tick one box per row)				
		More needed	About right	Less needed
	Car parks for staff	3 (13%)	21 (88%)	0 (0%)
	Car parks for visitors	12 (43%)	16 (57%)	0 (0%)
	On-street parking	10 (37%)	15 (56%)	2 (7%)
	On-street parking for delivery vehicles	12 (48%)	13 (52%)	0 (0%)

Q12 Including your own vehicles, how many average weekly deliveries do you <u>receive</u> via the following methods?		
	By car	1.5
	Transit or similar	4.6
	Lorry	5.6
	Articulated Vehicle	0.6

Q13 Including your own vehicles, how many average weekly deliveries do you <u>deliver</u> via the following methods?		
	By car	0.3
	Transit or similar	4.6
	Lorry	3.6
	Articulated Vehicle	0.3

Q14 How do you rate the following services / utilities in relation to your business? (Tick one box per row)					
		Good	Average	Poor	No opinion
	Electricity Supply	24 (71%)	6 (18%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)
	Water Supply	21 (62%)	6 (18%)	5 (15%)	2 (6%)
	Drainage	19 (56%)	4 (12%)	8 (24%)	3 (9%)
	Landline Telephone service	17 (52%)	8 (24%)	3 (9%)	5 (15%)
	Broadband	12 (36%)	12 (36%)	7 (21%)	2 (6%)
	Mobile Phone signal	6 (18%)	15 (44%)	13 (38%)	0 (0%)
<p>If you have answered Poor to any of the above, why is this? 14 responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smell of drains, poor reception, slow connection • Mobile phone signal is typically not great in the village. Networks 3 and O2 • Poor signal +4G • Mobile phone OK but no smart meter signal yet • Signal not available in parts of building • Regular power cuts, sewage smells, broadband width very limited • Mobile phone signal got much worse in last 3 years • Situated on a business park on Heath Lane - broadband very poor. Hopefully fibre soon • No internet very poor. Been told we are on the end of the line and it will not get better until fibre optics come • Informed broadband poor so haven't installed. Mobile phone signal poor at Heath Business Park • Not on main sewerage and it can be a bit variable • Drainage - River & brook often cannot take excess water (rain). Mobile phone signal often not adequate. • Terrible phone reception. Broadband slow to be upgraded & rolled out. Drains/sewerage consistent issues. • Telephone quality not very clear and slow, Broadband slow. 					

Q15 If money were available to invest in Infrastructure, where should this be spent? (Tick up to three choices only)				
3 (11%)	Sewerage / drainage	4 (15%)	Pavements	
1 (4%)	Water supply	8 (30%)	Roads	
0 (0%)	Electricity	12 (44%)	Parking	
0 (0%)	Gas	6 (22%)	Electric Vehicle charging	
8 (30%)	Renewable energy sources	8 (30%)	Public transport links	
10 (37%)	Mobile phone	3 (11%)	Cycle lanes	
10 (37%)	Broadband			

Q16 Are you able to fulfil your recruitment or apprenticeships needs locally?			
19 (63%)	Yes	11 (37%)	No

Q17 Would you give work experience to local 15+ years old young people?			
12 (36%)	Yes	21 (64%)	No

Q18 Could you provide advice or mentor young entrepreneurs or even provide work space for a short time for start-up businesses? (Tick one box per row)			
		Yes	No
	Entrepreneurs	7 (23%)	24 (77%)
	Start-up	5 (16%)	26 (84%)

Q19	Could the environmental impact of your business be reduced with the help of residents, for instance reduced travelling times by employing local people, direct sales to locals, etc.? Please explain in the box below.
	<p>17 responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having more support from local people • Yes, opportunities (free!) to advertise all local businesses • Our core aims are very much about reducing environmental impacts of growing food. We sell to local people in the villages, Coventry & Rugby. We employ as local as possible. • Unsure • No. Staff need to use car to visit service users in their own homes. • Business is too specialised requiring certain qualifications. • N/A / No - 11 responses

Q20	Is your business experiencing problems in any of the areas shown below? (Tick all that apply)			
	7 (35%)	High/rising costs	4 (20%)	Public transport
	5 (25%)	Shortage of skilled staff	6 (30%)	Road/traffic/parking issues for customers
	3 (15%)	Staff recruitment/ retention	2 (10%)	Road/traffic/parking issues for employees
	0 (0%)	Planning constraints	1 (5%)	Local competition
	1 (5%)	Access to appropriate advice	3 (15%)	Other
	If other, please specify the problem below – 2 responses:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural crime and theft a huge problem • We are concerned planning is if anything becoming too open, building rather than protecting growing land & small rural type businesses rather than being too constrained 			

Q21	Should the Wolston Neighbourhood Plan seek to define policies that protect high street shops and existing employment sites from a change of use, to maintain the mix, balance and vibrancy of our local shopping facilities, post office services and services?					
	19 (58%)	Yes	2 (6%)	No	12 (36%)	Don't know

Q22	Does your business use Wolston Post Office?			
	27 (82%)	Yes (go to Q23)	6 (18%)	No (go to Q24)
	If no, please give your reason(s) for not using it – 3 responses:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Stretton post office as easier parking and a friendlier service with little queuing. Also use it for banking and business vehicle tax • We don't really post things • Online banking, minimal postal use (use email) 			

Q23 If yes to Q22, does the Post Office provide all your business banking needs?			
	7 (27%)	Yes	19 (73%) No
	If no, please give your reason(s) why it does not? 16 responses:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't bank with Post Office, just post things. Pay bills sometimes • Business account used with bank • HSBC deposit banking not available • We do our banking online • Doesn't accept cash into Lloyds a/c • Centrally handled by Coventry University • Do not use for banking • Online banking • Do not use for banking • Cannot pay in Co-op bank cheques • We bank online • Too small - counter shared with normal food sales (Co-op) - no privacy. Limited function. • Generally yes, except for poor stocking of NatWest envelopes (I have been told NatWest are going to stop providing them) • Ignorance & competence of staff a problem. I was told I may NOT put stamps on my oversized letter (£1.25) had to be one of their labels - rubbish from Royal Mail reply. The swipe card wouldn't work – refused to get staff to help • On line banking & travel to Rugby as Post Office does not receive payments to go into CAF bank account • I use online business banking but post a lot of letters. 		

Q24 If the Post Office does not provide your business banking needs, does this involve the need for extra travel to a bank?			
	12 (43%)	Yes	16 (57%) No
	If yes, how many trip miles per year?		
	Average 53 miles		

Q25 What would help your business to develop and thrive during the next 12 years?	
	17 responses:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like a lot of the local businesses in Wolston. More local people using them. • All good • Public transport • A government that knew how to manage the country • A quick resolution to Brexit mess • Fibre broadband, better Post Office facilities • Easily accessible shops and services • No congestion charges; no restriction on vehicle use • Business local to Wolston i.e. 25miles radius • Security of tenure; more access to land for small scale agro ecological growing; good public transport links • Local networking events; free training/advice how to grow and promote business • Local population to use facilities more often. • More multi skilled people to share or pass excess work onto.....? • Better parking in village. Better signage/directions. Improved general infrastructure to keep up with growth. • Better parking • Better funding from Warwickshire County Council • More facilities for meetings. Maybe a cafe for informal meetings.

Q26 In your opinion should the Wolston Neighbourhood Plan encourage business / commercial development that provides local employment?			
29 (94%)	Yes	2 (6%)	No

Q27 If you answered yes to Q26, how do you think this should be achieved...? (Tick one box per row)

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Expansion of existing businesses	19 (83%)	0 (0%)	4 (17%)
Clustering near existing businesses	12 (57%)	1 (5%)	8 (38%)
Development of small craft units	19 (79%)	1 (4%)	4 (17%)
Development of co-working units	15 (68%)	0 (0%)	7 (32%)
Development of small business parks	18 (75%)	4 (17%)	2 (8%)
Development of large business parks	5 (26%)	10 (53%)	4 (21%)

If you answer no for any of the above, please specify the reason – 10 responses:

- Business parks are destroying small village shops the same as the towns.
- We do not need commercial development in the village
- Large business parks would create too much traffic
- Probably not enough to make craft units viable
- In my opinion large business parks do not locally recruit
- Not enough infrastructure e.g. roads
- Small businesses are more appropriate for a village. Large businesses can swamp the area very quickly
- The long term aim should be for everyone to live and work within walking distance so no need for cars or other transport
- Keep it small - we are a village! Good examples are Priory & Musmajas
- Wolston should remain a village, it is far bigger now than when we moved in and it's starting to feel like an extension to Coventry and Rugby. The thought of industrial units being developed horrifies me to the point I think I'd have to move

Q28 Is your business likely to require alternative premises over the next 12 years?

21 (66%)	No (go to Q30)
6 (19%)	Yes, larger premises in Wolston (go to Q29)
0 (0%)	Yes, smaller premises in Wolston (go to Q29)
5 (16%)	Yes, moving premises outside Wolston (go to Q29)

If you indicated you are moving premises outside Wolston or are considering doing so, what are your reasons? 4 responses:

- Current facilities may not be suitable for expansion and we may need more specialist space.
- Would depend on land availability we would prefer to stay in the area
- We have an office base in Ryton Gardens. Lease arrangement until 2020 (August), Will have to look for other cost effective premises if we cannot stay when Coventry University take over site.
- Wolston is a village where people live. I would need a small industrial unit and Wolston is not the place for that.

Q29 If you answered yes in Q28, how much space will you require? (Tick one box per row)					
		Up to 50sq. mtrs.	51 to 100sq mtrs.	101 or more sq. mtrs.	N/A
	Industrial workshop	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	2 (29%)	2 (29%)
	Office	1 (13%)	3 (38%)	2 (25%)	2 (25%)
	Retail	0 (0%)	1 (13%)	2 (25%)	5 (63%)
	Storage – covered	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	4 (57%)
	Storage – open	1 (14%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	5 (71%)
	Other	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (13%)	7 (88%)
	If other, what type of premises – 2 responses:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenhouses/poly tunnels 20 acres of land 				

Q30 If you are a local sole trader, do you have access to adequate storage?			
15 (100%)	Yes	0 (0%)	No

Q31 Are there any planning constraints or barriers either locally or nationally that will or may prevent your business from developing during the next 12 years?					
1 (3%)	Yes	21 (70%)	No	8 (27%)	No opinion
	If Yes, please describe – 1 response:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers are more to do with land ownership and sometimes land use i.e. turning grazing to vegetable growing 				

Q32 Should the Wolston Neighbourhood Plan encourage more land to be made available for employment purposes?				
11 (34%)	Yes (go to Q33)	14 (44%)	Don't know (go to Q35)	
7 (22%)	No (go to Q35)			

Q33 Which of the following types of employment should be encouraged? (Tick all that apply)				
7 (64%)	Tourism, leisure & crafts	5 (45%)	Industrial & manufacturing	
3 (27%)	Transport, storage & distribution	6 (55%)	Pubs, restaurants and cafes	
4 (36%)	Financial and professional services	6 (55%)	IT and Hi-Tech	
10 (91%)	Shops and offices	5 (45%)	Community services (Council)	
3 (27%)	Medical services	3 (27%)	Other	
	If other, please specify here – 2 responses:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing food & other sustainable agriculture/worked woodland etc Need a flexible approach to embrace all entrepreneurs 			

Q34 What would encourage new business to locate in Wolston?	
	<p>14 responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not needed • Quiet surroundings • Proper premises with land to expand and employees to park • Public transport • Good infrastructure, low rates, modern buildings • Better facilities in the village • Attractive office spaces that have good transport links with room to expand - and good value for money. • Premises at reasonable rent; good broadband; skilled employees; Advice with gaining clients/customers; promoting village support like accountants; shared facilities like photocopiers • Better public transport link between parishes/villages • Competitive rental rates; free meeting rooms available; vibrant local networking • Suitable premises and housing that could accommodate home based work, office & workshop. Latest Bloor's estate is a perfect example of what we do not want in that respect! • Availability of units. More services (shops etc) & better infrastructure. It is not up to scratch with the growing village • Knowing that it is viable & parking availability for passing custom • Meeting facilities

Q35 What areas of Business Support do you access? (Tick all that apply)				
	13 (68%)	General Advice	8 (42%)	Skills Training
	7 (37%)	Funding	2 (11%)	Other
	If other, please specify - 1 response:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIRE networking 			

Q36 What areas of Business Support would you like to access to help your business grow?	
	<p>6 responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • Any support both financial and knowledge to help new businesses • Research and development funding • Training; mentorship • Other local and ? business • Unsure

Q37 Should the Wolston Neighbourhood Plan define policies that promote and encourage working from home?						
	19 (59%)	Yes	2 (6%)	No	11 (34%)	Don't know/No opinion

Q38 If you are a homeworker, are there improvements that would make Wolston more supportive of homeworking? (Tick all that apply)		
	3 (19%)	Access to shared office space/hot desk (occasional or regular)
	4 (25%)	Access to photocopying and printing services
	9 (56%)	Coffee shop or other venue with Wi-Fi for meetings with clients
	3 (19%)	An informal homeworkers' network or network meeting place
	2 (13%)	Centralised business telephone answer service
	5 (31%)	Not a homeworker
	2 (13%)	Other
	<p>If other, please specify here – 2 responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer Our current facilities are adequate for us at this stage 	

Q39 Are there any other comments you wish to make about local employment and economy within Wolston?	
	<p>6 responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Let's encourage the young especially school leavers No longer young people looking for part time or holiday work as 20 years ago I think any future development should include the potential for flexibility so if someone wishes to start a business they can - so houses need expansion capability - workshop or office. Even if just a part time business Generally Okay. Could be more opportunities but general infrastructure is lacking. Also as per Q38 - a cafe/coffee shop would be fantastic! Shops and cafes offer employment opportunities. We should not seek the development of industrial units in our village.