

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CONSULTATION AS PERCENTAGES

Q1. What category is your business in?

61 responses:

Retail **32.78%**;

Professional **31.14%**,

Service **18.03%**.

Response also came from a provider of business space and provider of property.

Q2. What size and type of unit does your business occupy?

Size /50 responses and type /41 responses:

The overwhelming response to size of unit was small at **31** which equates to **62%**;

26% medium

with only **8%** having large premises.

44.34% of responses were from the Retail sector

19.51% were responses from Offices and those working from Home **18.51%**.

4.87% were Industrial responses.

Q3. Where do the majority of your employees live – inside or outside the parish?

53 responses:

From the responses a similar number of employees live inside Billingshurst parish (**51%**) those who live outside (**49%**).

Most employees live within the West Sussex area; but some come from nearby counties.

WEST SUSSEX - HORSHAM, CRAWLEY, WORTHING, SHOREHAM, LANCING, FINDON VALLEY, CHICHESTER, WISBOROUGH GREEN, WEST CHILTINGTON, KIRDFORD, COOLHAM, THAKEHAM, PULBOROUGH, STORRINGTON, STEYNING, SOUTHWATER, COOTHAM, LOXWOOD, LITTLEHAMPTON, PETWORTH, MIDHURST, ASHINGTON, HAYWARDS HEATH, BURGESS HILL, BROOKS GREEN, EAST GRINSTEAD, PAGHAM and IN ALL DIRECTIONS – UP TO 20 MINUTES AWAY BY CAR /WITHIN A 20 MILE RADIUS.

SURREY, CRANLEIGH, GUILDFORD, CHERTSEY, ALFOLD, CHIDDINGFOLD, REIGATE

HAMPSHIRE, ALTON

EAST SUSSEX. BRIGHTON

LONDON.

WALES.

Q4. Are there constraints for your Billingshurst business to grow?

60 responses:

Two thirds of respondents (**66.6%**) said that there are constraints to the growth of their Billingshurst businesses.

23% said there were no constraints

10% did not know.

Q5. If yes, which constraints affect your business?

138 responses:

Constraints varied although Parking was the highest single response at **19.56%**.

The second highest **single** response was Broadband speeds and coverage which was **14.49%**.

High rents and business rates (amalgamated) accounted for a further **19.56%**. Lack of affordable accommodation was a comment.

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CONSULTATION AS PERCENTAGES

No suitable office, retail and available workshops (amalgamated) -**18.84%**

Skilled and unskilled labour shortages accounted for **9.4%**. Need for housing for new workers and their families was a comment.

Vehicular access constraints were **7.24%**; together with comment about accessibility.

Economy as a constraint was **6.52%** - Comments included national policies which are unfair, internet sales, not enough footfall and lack of other quality independent retailers.

Q6. Does up to date computer technology / high speed Broadband play a lead role in your business? 61 responses:

80.32% of the responses indicated computer technology and high speed broadband play a lead role in their businesses.

19.67% said it did not.

Q7. Do you think infrastructure constrains development of your Billingshurst business?

60 responses:

60% thought that infrastructure was a constraint to the development of their businesses.

20% said that it did not

20% did not know.

Q8. What improvements in infrastructure would assist your business?

144 responses:

Of the businesses who responded.

Parking at **26.38%** topped the responses. One comment was that the parking policy seems very strict for a small village, and asks why have such a policy if there are limited or no alternatives to on-street parking.

Telephone had an **11%** response – but comments included improvements to fast Broadband communications, High Speed Broadband and cheaper Broadband; Broadband outside the village and better mobile signal; better mobile telephone coverage; better Broadband in the rural areas. It is clear that some improvements are needed in communications.

Quality of the road network had an **11%** response; with comment that the road surfaces in the parish need improvement. Better transport links.

Improvement to Rail service had a higher response at **10.41%**; combined bus and rail service accounted for **15.27%** of responses.

Comments include - the train service: way below adequate. Commuting is becoming impossible. This is the main issue facing business owners who conduct business in London. Need regular bus service to improve workforce transport – stop at Brinsbury.

Improvements to Electricity had a **4.86%** response and combined with Gas improvements these utilities recorded **5.5%** of responses.

However, electricity elicited the most comments eg. Reliable power required; electricity failures are a constant reoccurring problem; there is a huge issue with constant supply of electricity to

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CONSULTATION AS PERCENTAGES

Billingshurst, it seems very fragile when the weather changes compared to other areas; there is no 3 phase electricity; we need constant electricity supply; Improvements to foul and surface water drainage each had a **5.5%** response. Collectively they accounted for **11%** of the total responses and included the comment – there is a problem of flooding.

Q.9 Where do you think these infrastructure improvements are specifically needed in the parish?

28 responses:

Parking once again topped the chart with Parking in the centre/free and affordable parking in the village centre and Parking off road – **57.14%**.

Several comments mention Jengers Mead parking regime. Free parking to encourage people into the village. Station Parking is inadequate also. It is difficult for deliveries to get access due to railway users parking on Natts Lane.

Drainage on entry to town – **7.14%**

Improvements – anywhere with good road connectivity – **7.14%**;

A29 is overcrowded; poor links to A24; A272 is inadequate.

Proximity to town centre – **7.14%**

Improve signage – **7.14%**. More signage on the High street to indicate availability of more shops and businesses are in Jengers Mead to visitors etc. Road signage is very poor in the area in general.

Improvements in office, retail and industrial units – **3.57%**

Throughout, especially to the East – **3.57%**

A272 improve traffic and impact on East Street – **3.75%**

Station Road / Gillmans / Natts Lane – **3.75%**.

Comments: Station Road is dangerous. Need better access to the industrial areas in Station Road.

Q.10 Is there a need to allocate new areas for business use?

58 responses:

YES – **53.44%** NO – **20.68%** Don't Know **25.86%**

Over half of the respondents agree that there is a need to allocate new areas for business use.

However, if the DON'T KNOW responses were not calculated the YES respondents were **72.09%** with the NO at **27.9%**

Q.11 Do you think the existing business areas would be better relocated elsewhere in Billingshurst? If yes, then where?

29 responses:

Although no one place was put forward for relocation **68.96%** agreed that existing businesses would be better located elsewhere.

Suggestions included north, south, east and west but outside the village with better accessibility and access to road networks including the bypass.

OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS CONSULTATION AS PERCENTAGES

31.03% of respondents gave a negative answer. Comment: retail or offices do not require relocation – just expansion / improvement.

3.44% said offices in village.

Q.12 If so, what type of business accommodation should be delivered?

97 responses:

Petrol Station /Retail topped the chart with **21.64%**;

followed by light industrial units at **20.61%**;

shops and retail units together with offices were equal at **17.1%**.

Factory /Manufacturing was **9.27%**

Hospitality was **6.1%**

Q.13 Is there a demand for business starter units providing low cost, flexible workspaces?

33 responses but **25 don't know:**

Of those who responded **78.78%** said that there was a demand for the workspaces.

Q.14 What in your opinion would encourage businesses to locate in Billingshurst?

74 responses:

Free/ better parking scored highest with **25.67%**.

Once again Jengers Mead received negative comments due to the parking regime.

Accessibility and connectivity between road and rail was in second place **20.27%**

Affordable business space with good facilities shared joint third placing with diverse / more shops and lower rates/rent. Each was **9.4%**.

Comments consisted of availability of premises with low cost rents; office /retail units to rent and buy.

Although more housing was mentioned, affordable housing came in the comments.

Q.15 Do you see a successful future for your business in Billingshurst over the next 5-10 years?

57 responses:

71.9% of businesses said YES.

It was qualified by one respondent as “but only with improvements – infrastructure needs investment and imagination”.

Parking in Billingshurst is seen as detrimental to its economic stability.