

TRADERS REPORTS

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- 1 Introduction
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2016 Survey

1 Introduction

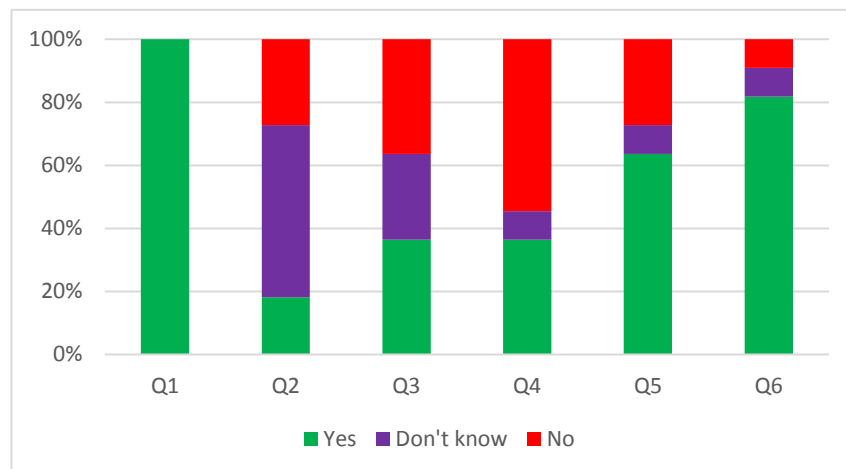
1.1 A questionnaire (see Appendix 1) to ascertain the local Traders' views on the Neighbourhood Plan was emailed to the 58 businesses in the Botley Traders Association.

1.2 Due to a low response rate this was followed up by personal interviews using the same questionnaire.

2 Results

2.1 There were 11 responses and the results are shown below

	Yes	Don't know	No
Q1 Requires more parking for the public and customers	11	0	0
Q2 Requires better public transport services	2	6	3
Q3 Benefit to business from the proposed By-pass	4	3	4
Q4 Requires faster/more reliable Broadband	4	1	6
Q5 Be better informed about plans	7	1	3
Q6 Environment requires improvement	9	1	1



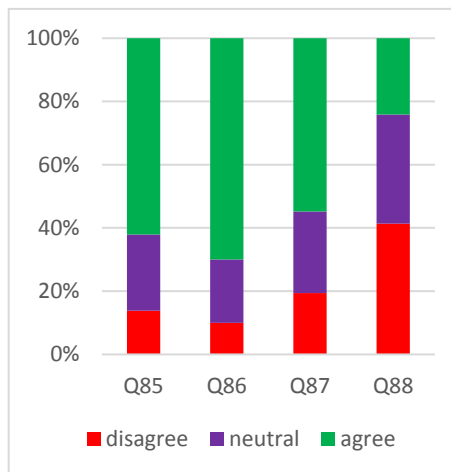
a The majority felt that more parking (Q1) and environmental improvements (Q6) were required.

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- b Just under two-thirds of Traders felt they should be better informed about plans involving the Square (Q5).
- c Over 60% felt there would be no clear benefit from the By-pass (Q3) or from more reliable faster Broadband (Q4) and over 80% could see no clear benefit from better public transport links (Q2).

3 Results of Questions 85 to 88 from 2016 Community Questionnaire

3.1 Questions 85 to 88 in the 2016 Community Survey asked about changes that would support the growth of businesses. Given that there were only 58 members of the Botley Traders Association at that time the response rate of 52% (30 respondents) was good. The results are shown below.



- a Two-thirds agreed that improved mobile phone reception and faster more reliable Broadband would be a benefit.
- b Just over half felt that better transport links would help them.
- c Only a quarter felt better or larger workspace would be helpful.

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2019 Survey

1 Introduction

- 1.1 During July and August 2019, a consultation exercise was undertaken with Traders in the High Street and at the Botley Mills, as part of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The purpose was to ascertain views on current issues, how businesses might be affected by the Botley Bypass, and what they might need to thrive in future. Traders were given a questionnaire and leaflet, and some were interviewed.
- 1.2 A drop-in session was held at the Bugle Inn on 30 July 2019.
- 1.3 Some Traders submitted their views by email.
- 1.4 Unfortunately, the Botley Traders Association is no longer active, but an interest in reviving it was expressed during this survey.

2 Results

- 2.1 The response from Traders was not particularly high numerically, but it was positive and significant. There is clearly a lot of concern about the future, especially regarding the continuing closure of businesses.
- 2.2 There were ten email responses and two Traders came to the drop-in session and one of these was able to speak on behalf of about forty business at the Botley Mills. The main points raised were:
- a Change is inevitable but with it comes uncertainty, which has a very negative impact on businesses. The trading environment in Botley has been challenging for some time with loss of a toy shop, a baby shop, a butcher, a shoe shop, two gift shops, three fashion boutiques and a coffee shop and some premises remain empty
 - b The challenge, in the face of retail migrating online, is to ensure that there is an accessible and enjoyable Village environment. Passing trade is important and needs to continue, so do not prevent through traffic, but better parking in and around the Square is essential for businesses to thrive;

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- c In the future many customers will choose to come to the shops because of their specialised nature and based on advertising and recommendation. This would make Botley more of a destination shopping centre;
- d We need a cleaner and quieter Village, unrivalled locally for its attractive and variable hospitality culture for socialising and relaxing and a diverse range of services and shops;
- e More pavement seating in the Square is needed, but as far as possible not by loss of additional car parking capacity. However, extra seating will only benefit local businesses if Eastleigh Borough Council allow these spaces to be used for business purposes and for advertising the businesses;
- f Encourage existing residents and new residents in new developments around Botley to come to the Village centre, for example by community events, when possibly shops might remain open, and by local advertising;
- g Residents close to the Square and the Market Hall might consider renting car parking space for staff parking, so freeing other parking for customers. Other schemes for staff parking without loss of customer parking need to be considered;
- h Development of the Square must include provision for cycleways;
- i There must be better integration of the Square to the Botley Mills and better signage at the road frontage of the Mills to promote the businesses there;
- j Important that access for deliveries is maintained, but after the opening of the Bypass leading to less traffic passing through the Square this might be easier. However, it is essential that there is still access to the Square for larger delivery vehicles, and;
- k During both the construction of the Bypass and the development of the Square there must be minimal disruption to trade. Hampshire Highways must plan and schedule work to minimise disruption.

2.3 Two key issues have emerged from this consultation process, these being:

- a Continued ease of access by customers is essential, especially for cars with appropriate parking, and;
- b When the Bypass is open the Village centre must not be neglected or sidelined. Customers must not only be able to but must want to use the Village centre services, shops and hospitality outlets.

2.4 Objectives:

- a The Parish Council would encourage local businesses to actively support the reformation of the Botley Traders Association;

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- b The Parish Council and local businesses to work together for community events and local advertising to encourage all Botley residents to support the Village centre businesses;
- c Redesign of the Square is needed to provide:
 - i good access by foot, bicycle, bus and car;
 - ii more public seating with less noise and airborne pollution;
 - iii adequate car parking for both staff and customers;
 - iv appropriately sited and available sites for deliveries to businesses in the Square, and;
 - v better integration of the Square with the Botley Mills;
- d During both the construction of the Bypass and any redevelopment of the Square there must be minimal disruption to the businesses in and around the Square.

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