

2010+ ~~_____ Hungerford~~

Hungerford and District Business Survey

Final Report

January 2005

THIS IS AN UNCHECKED DRAFT

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Hungerford 2010+

The Market Towns Initiative was established by the Countryside Agency to help revitalise the market towns as rural service centres in the 21st century. The process is intended to create a shared vision of the town's future, shaped by the people who live in the area and use the retail, leisure, professional and public services located within the town. Funding is then available to take forward the vision and tackle the issues raised. Market towns across the country have already started the process with promising results. Now it's Hungerford's turn.

The initiative starts with a 'health check' of the town's economy, resources and social assets, including a survey of business needs. We already have the conclusions of the 2002 Hungerford Business Audit, but we need to update the results and extend its scope. Participation also raises awareness of 2010+

The Economy Working group has therefore run a questionnaire-based survey of local businesses. We sent a questionnaire to 346 companies, of which we were able to validate the addresses of 274.

This report presents the results from the 30% questionnaires returned (102 companies).

We are very grateful for their contributions.

The Survey

The questionnaire (see Appendix B) follows the standard snapshot worksheet structure, with questions grouped under six main headings, with an additional space for personal comments.

- Your business
- Your workforce
- Your premises
- Retail and town centre
- Business services
- Hungerford as a business

The mailing list was based on data purchased from DBS. The selection criterion was businesses with premises or registered addresses with RG17 0## postcodes (i.e. Hungerford and Eddington). This list was then cross-checked against the BT business phone book and corrected where a discrepancy was noticed. Contact names were available for most businesses. Questionnaires were either posted or delivered by hand, with a stamped addressed reply envelope.

This final version of the report includes results from 102 questionnaires, an excellent response rate of 30%. Respondents were reassured that completed questionnaires would be confidential to the members of the economy group but that if contact details were included, a copy of the final report would be sent to them. 33 did so (32%).

Cautions

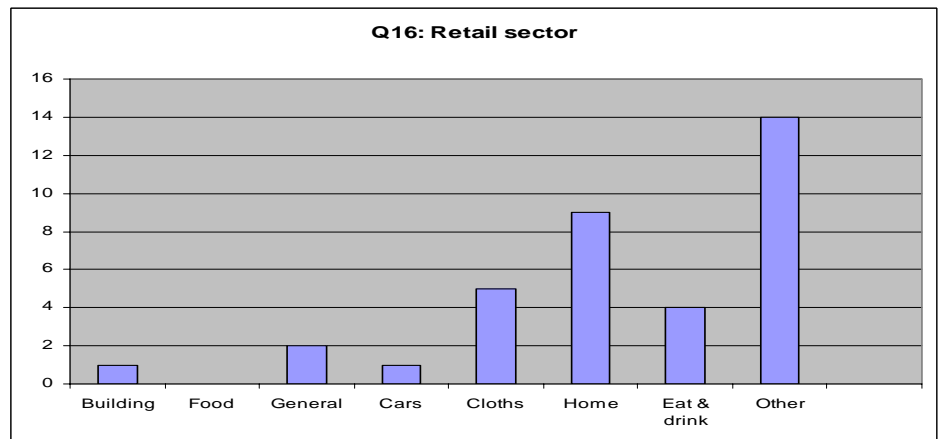
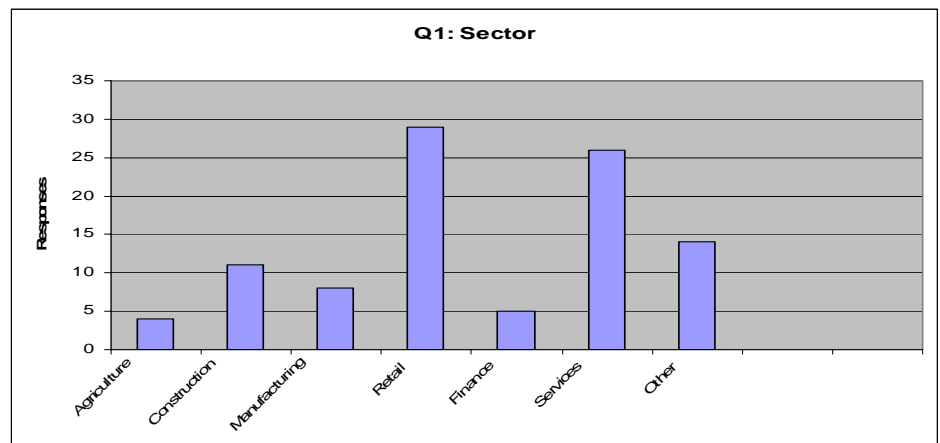
In looking at the results, the following need to be born in mind:

- As with all such surveys, the results are indicative but not definitive.
- The charts indicate the number of respondents giving the different answers, **not percentages**.
- The total number of questionnaires was 102, but not all respondents answered every question and, where free text answers were invited, there may be more than one comment per question.
- Free text comments were grouped and coded, but most have also been recorded in their original form.

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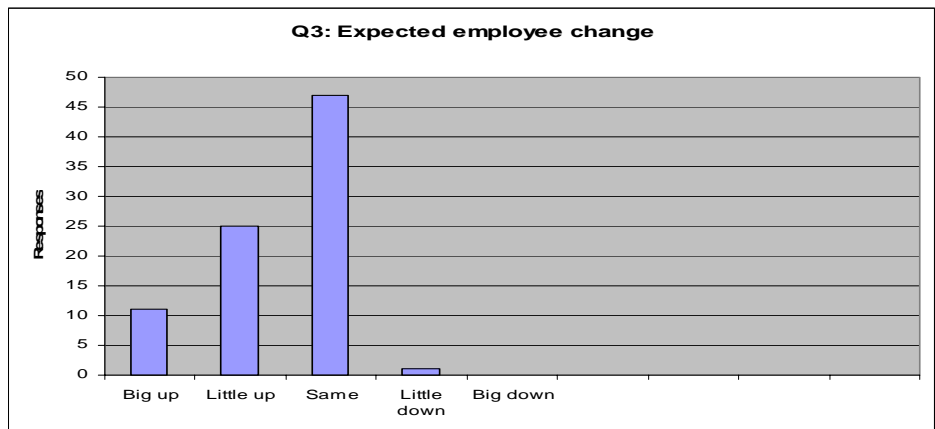
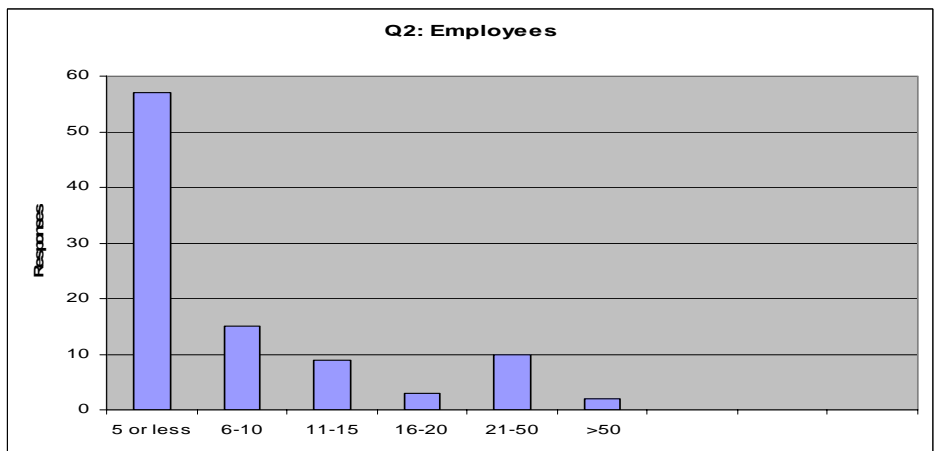
The Business

Unsurprisingly, the retail (30%) and service (27%) sectors dominate the results. The breakdown of retailers that completed the 'Town Centre' page is given below (Q16).



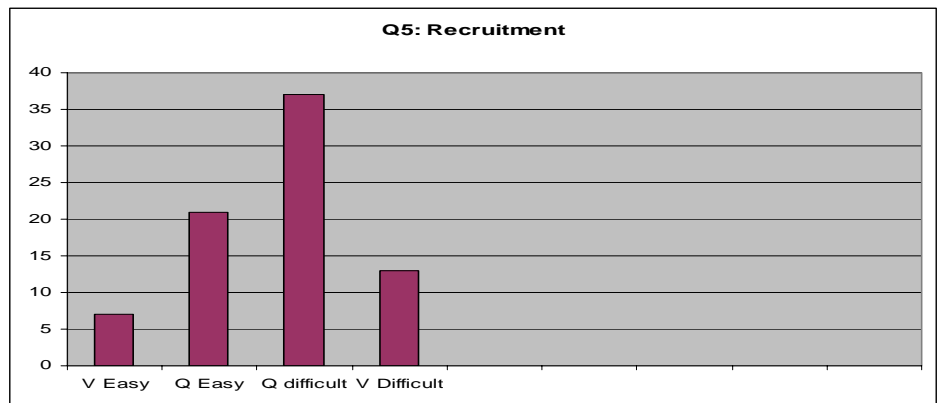
Workforce

The majority (59%) of the responses are from small (mainly retail) businesses with 5 or fewer employees (Q2). The majority expect the number of employees to stay roughly the same (Q3), but almost half expect to grow, with general business growth being by far the dominant reason (Q4).



Recruitment

The largest number of respondents (47%) reported that it was 'quite difficult' to recruit staff and 17% that it was 'very difficult' (Q6). However 27% found it 'quite easy' and 9% 'very easy'.



Those experiencing recruitment difficulties (Q6) seemed most likely to be looking for skilled trades (29%) and professional staff (25%).

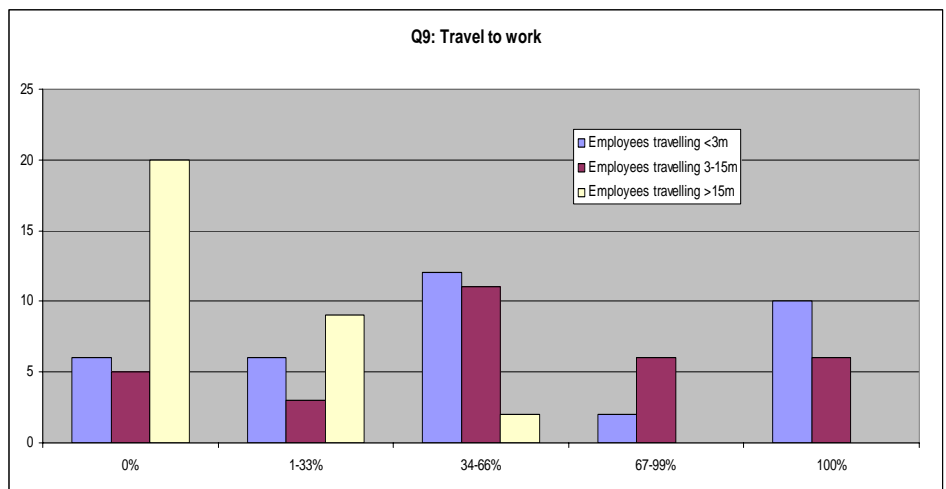
The barriers to recruitment (Q7) were skills shortages (22%) and high levels of employment (20%), quality of applicants (18%), and salary expectations (16%).

Specialist crafts seemed to be finding it difficult to get young people to enter the trade.

Only 8 respondents thought local training provision was not meeting employers' needs, although 27 rated the availability of training locally as poor or very poor in Q20. A significant number said they did not know anything about locally available courses. The area's providers many not be reaching the businesses?

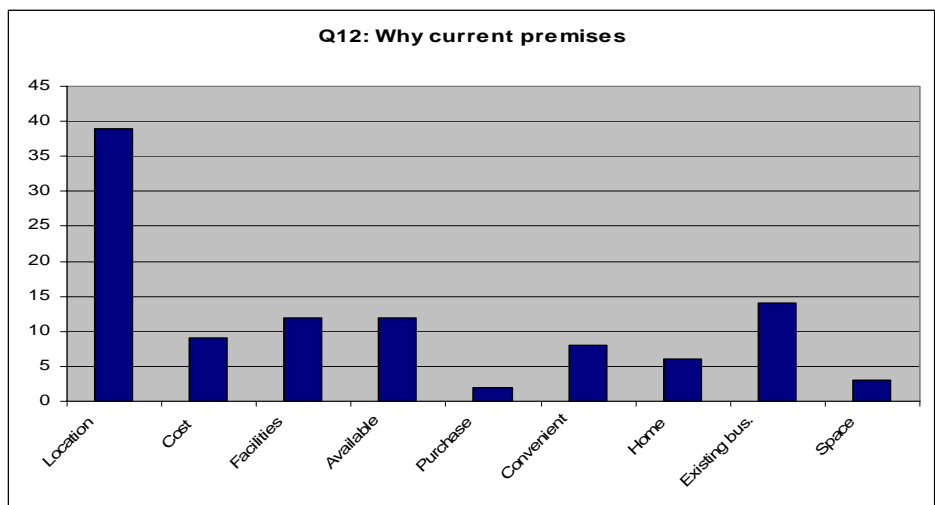
Travelling to work

The overwhelming majority of staff travel less than 15 miles to work. The figures will be analysed further to make the results easier to follow, but in the meantime the graph below shows how many companies said that various percentages of their employees travels less than 3, 3-15, or over 15 miles. The number of employees per business has not yet been taken into account.

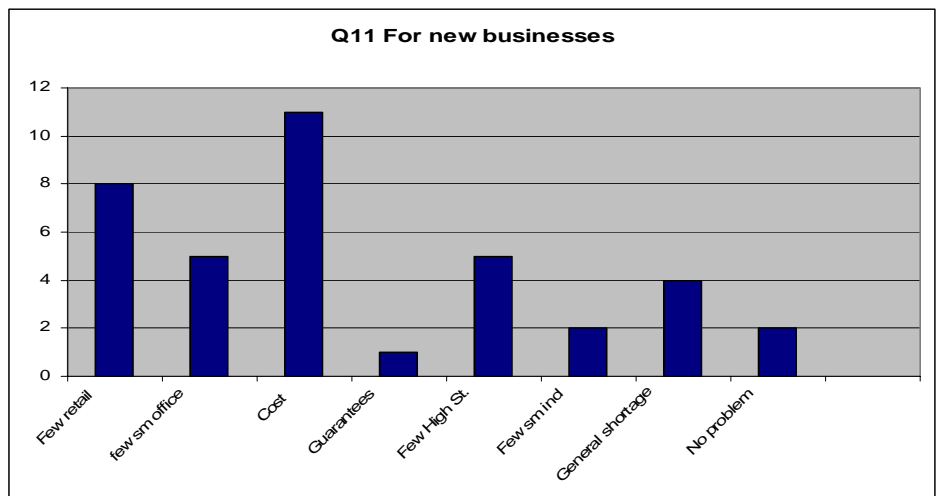


Finding premises

It is not always easy to find the right premises in the Hungerford area, but it seems to depend on what is required. 30% found it quite difficult and 10% very difficult to get somewhere suitable, compared to 33% that found it quite easy and 24% very easy. The reasons given for the eventual choice are shown on the chart below. Having found premises, the vast majority to date are either very (45%) or quite (48%) satisfied with them.

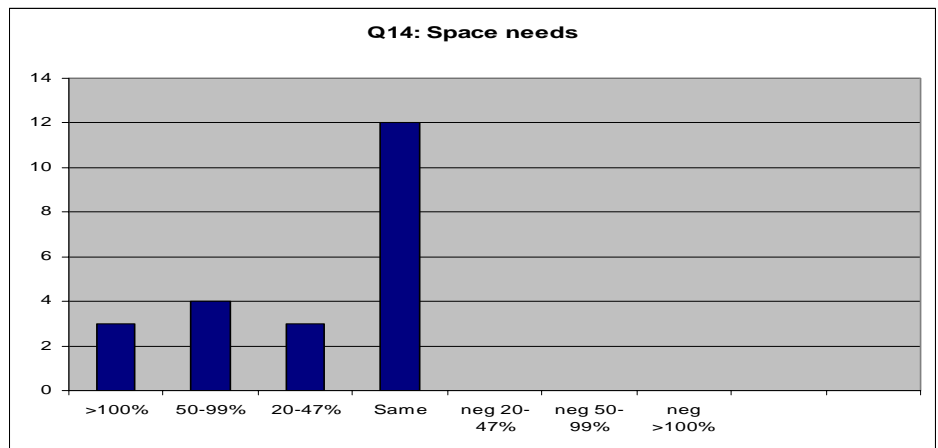


On the basis of our results, High Street retail properties and reasonably priced 'starter' business accommodation are in particularly short supply. The chart below illustrates range of comments made about the potential difficulties new businesses face.



Future Needs

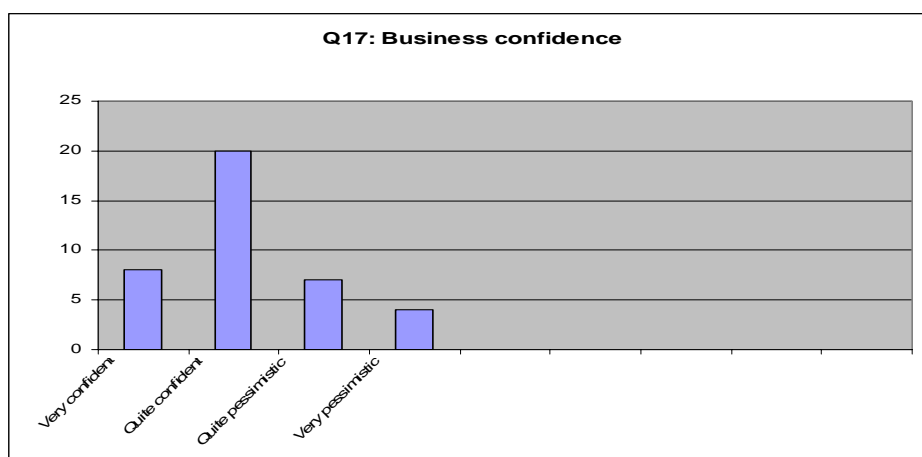
The majority (55%) of respondents anticipated no change in their space requirements over the next 3 years, but some across a range of sectors were anticipating needing more. The picture should become clearer when the full results are available.



Most (61%) expected rents to rise. The remainder said they expected no change, either because they owned the property or for some other reason. All those who gave a figure expected rents to rise by over 10% over the next 3 years.

The Town Centre

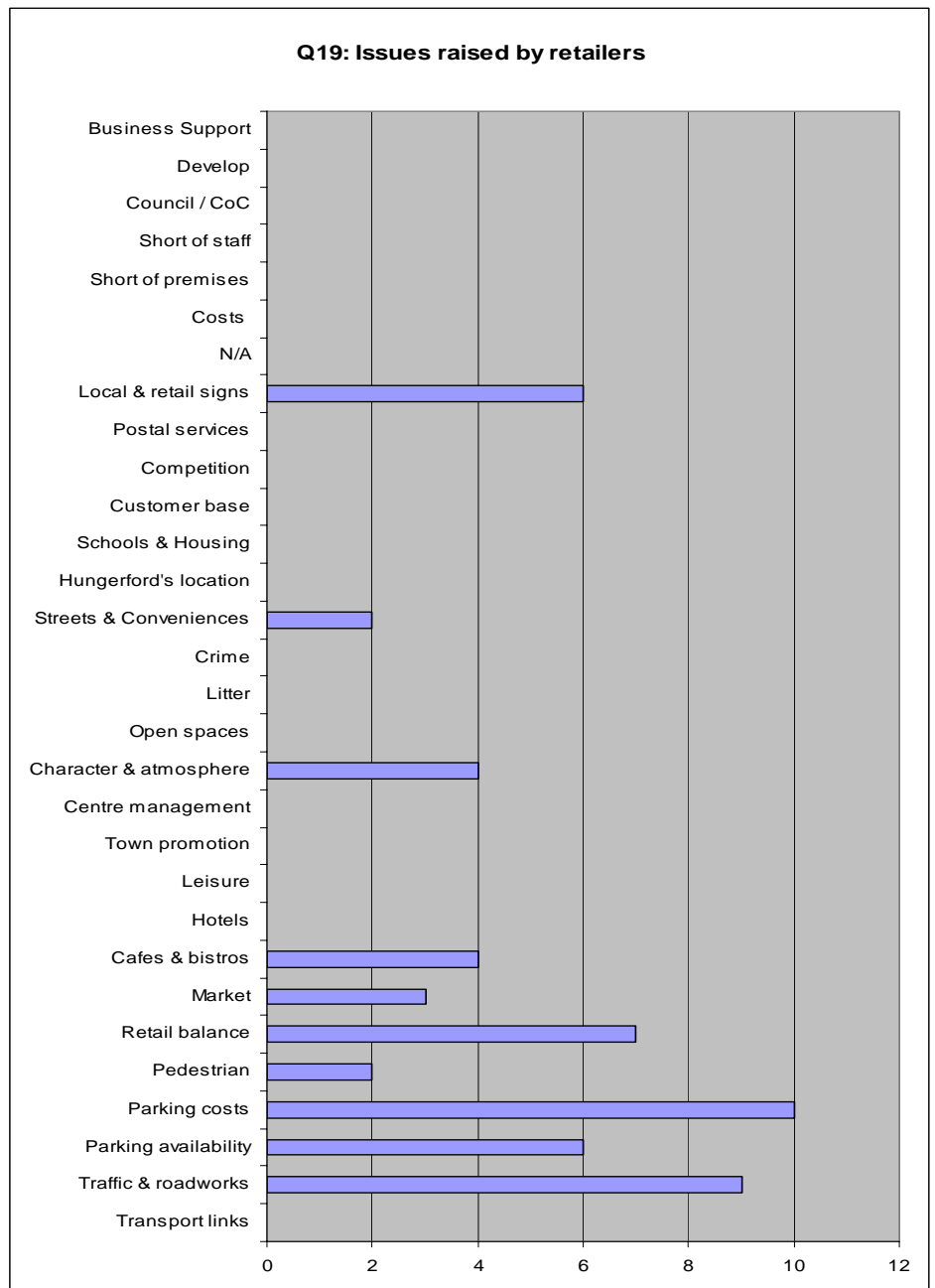
This set of questions was intended only for town centre retailers (39 respondents) (see 'The Business' earlier in this report for a breakdown). Almost all are inevitably in the High Street / Bridge Street area. Most businesses are very (21%) or quite (51%) confident about future trading, although that leaves 28% either quite or very pessimistic.



The chart overleaf shows the topics that generated most comments from town centre retailers and individual comments are listed in Appendix A. Parking costs were the biggest source of complaint (19% of all comments); mainly it seems because of the cost for employees rather than visitors. Over the week, they add up. Also on the downside, traffic congestion and (particularly) roadworks conducted with a lack of planning and urgency seem to have caused significant problems to some businesses. Several commented on dangerously narrow paths over the canal bridge.

The general character and atmosphere of the town was a source of pleasure and attracts visitors. Looking across the comments on this page and those on elsewhere in the questionnaire, the emerging town centre vision seems to be of a premium shopping destination, attracting visitors and clients from neighbouring areas with a mix of 'upmarket' and specialist shops, quality cafes and bistros, hotels with a reputation for excellence and value, and a revitalised general/farmers market. The balance of the different types of retail shop is clearly an issue.

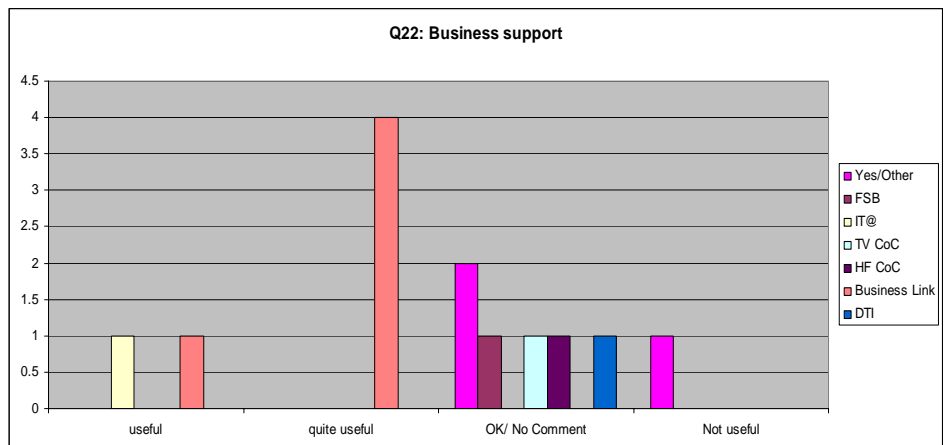
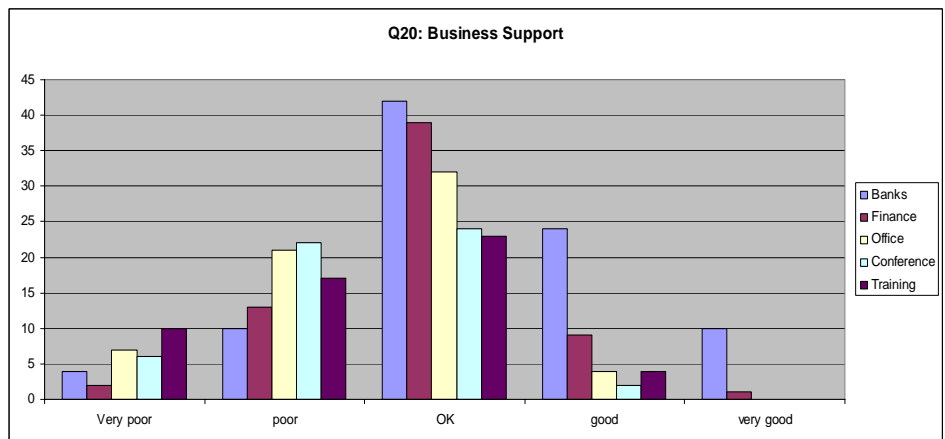
The general view – expressed particularly in face to face discussions - seems to be that concerted action needs to be taken to define the vision and invest significant amounts of money in promoting the town generally and its many assets (including the common and canal). It will not happen by itself. Other comments related to signs and information to draw more people into the town, raise their awareness of specific attractions and generally help them find their way around.



Business Support

This set of questions related to business support services. Overall, banking services were rated quite highly and other financial services appeared satisfactory. On the other hand, most office services –including reprographics, stationery and office equipment - are not available in the town. Office supplies was the service most often flagged up as missing, but this may simply reflect the balance of this initial sample. Other types of business had other service needs (e.g. IT support or building trades) or access to outlets such as a ‘cash and carry’.

Conference facilities and training were rated poorly by some and ‘OK’ by others. One respondent noted a lack of suitable business entertainment venues, which ties in with the comments received about the need for quality hotels in the area. Different companies have different needs, but there do seem to be opportunities. Few businesses have sought advice from Business link or other organisations, though those (17) that did usually seem to have been fairly satisfied.

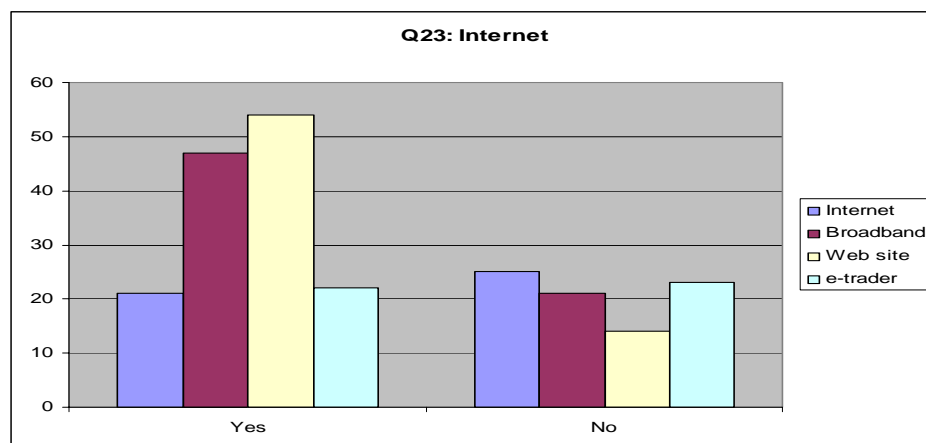


Information Technology

Broadband is available in Hungerford, and there were no IT-related complaints. Roughly half our respondents were on broadband and half had a web site. 22 respondents said that they sold goods or services over the internet.

Responses from smaller home-based businesses emphasise how important broadband has been in facilitating the operation of small consultancy and other businesses. Given Hungerford's many attractions as a place to live, it may well be that there is a significant but largely invisible home-based business community making a contribution to the local economy.

Not much more than a half of the businesses on our mailing list were included in the phone book. Even allowing for those that are not trading, just have a registered office in the town, or have closed or moved, this leaves a significant number of businesses with no separate trading address. In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests there is a range of home-based businesses locally that would not appear on most lists, from B&Bs to management consultants.



Hungerford

The last two sections offered respondents the chance to comment on the benefits and drawbacks of Hungerford as a business location, and to add personal comments if they were a resident (about a half were). Responses are summarised by topic on the charts overleaf and listed individually in Appendix A.

Four perceived benefits dominated the responses:

- A good customer base
- Hungerford's location
- Good transport links
- Character and atmosphere of the town

It seems clear from the comments that businesses want to see the town evolve and improve the quality of its shops and environment but without compromising the character, atmosphere and friendliness that are such important attractions.

The perceived drawbacks are somewhat more varied. The customer base features strongly again; though this time the comments are from businesses who find that there is some difficulty attracting the right customers to Hungerford (even though there might be a good potential customer base in many cases).

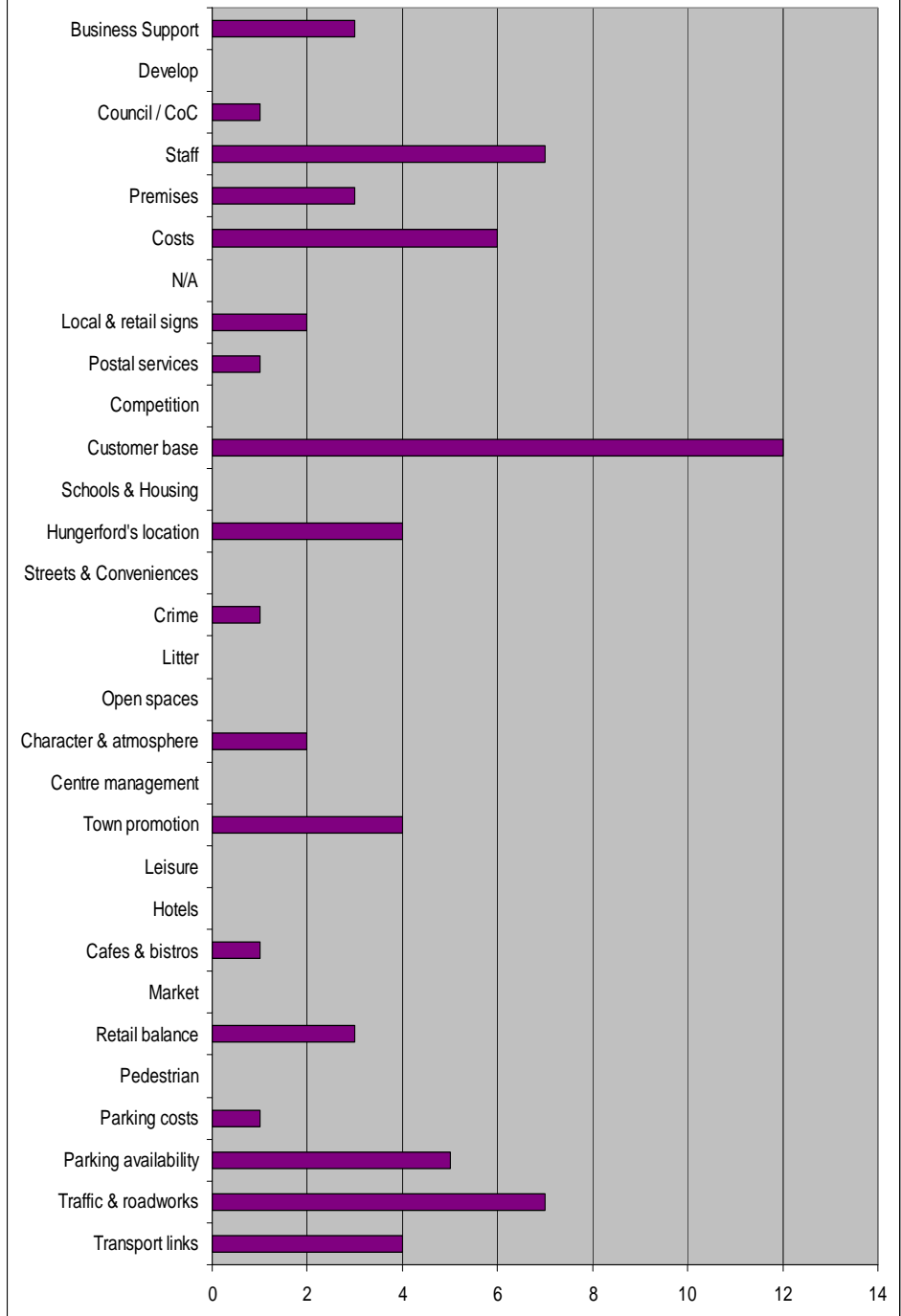
There are more comments on the problems of traffic, roadworks and parking, on the promotion of the town, and the costs and difficulties of finding premises and staff. Benefits outnumber drawbacks by 135 to 64.

Some of the ideas for improving matters were simply the reverse of the problem (e.g. fewer roadworks) but there were a good number of specific suggestions, in three main clusters:

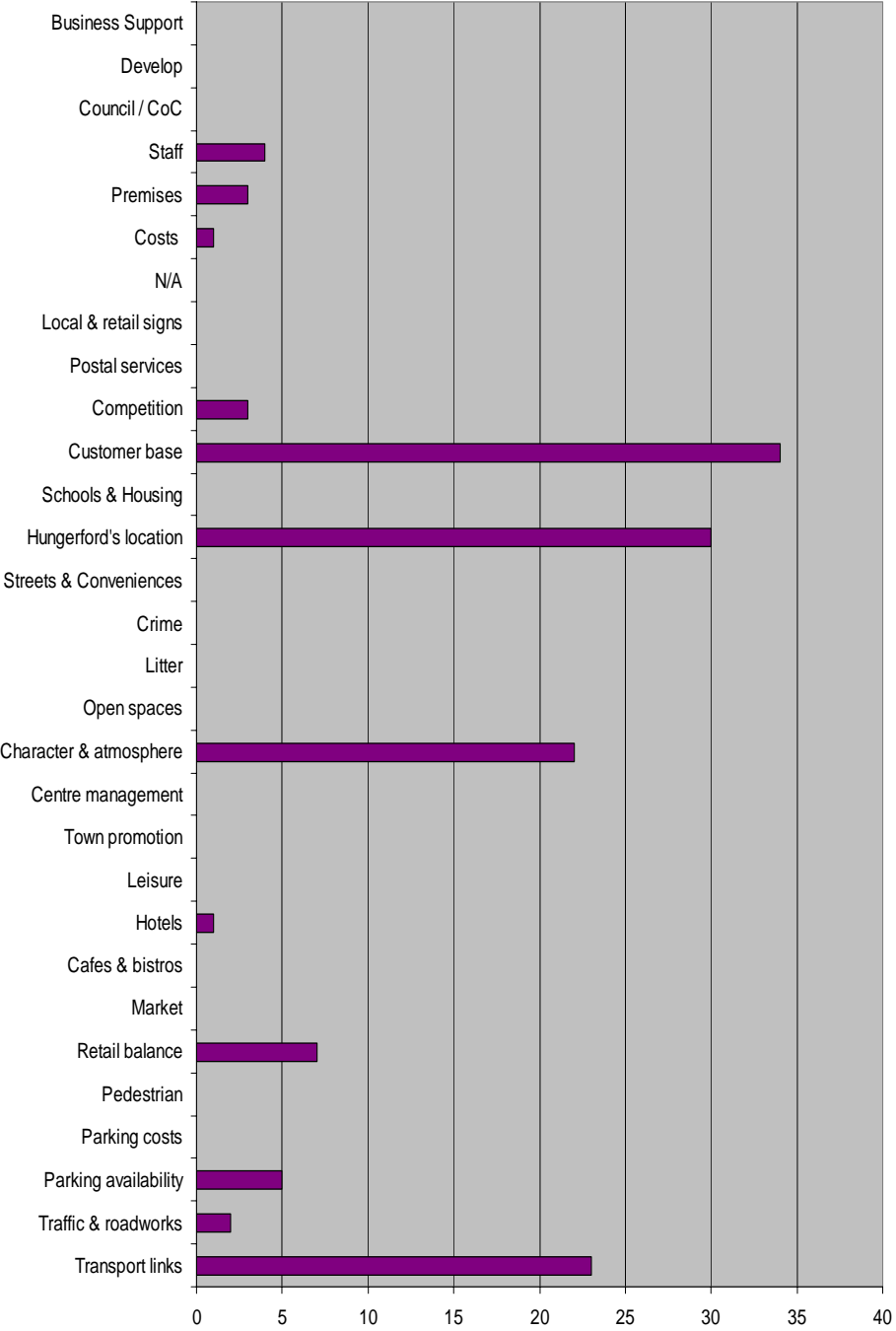
- Improving the town as somewhere to visit (retail balance, attracting new shops, cafes, investing in hotels etc)
- Promoting the town and driving forward improvements, helping new businesses get started
- Managing cars and pedestrians better (improving parking, traffic flow, roadworks misery, pedestrian access)

It is interesting that many comments are about eating and drinking. Big towns are now seen as hostile in evenings, so there may be real opportunities for market towns if they attract businesses and provide a safe, attractive environment to go out in the evening?

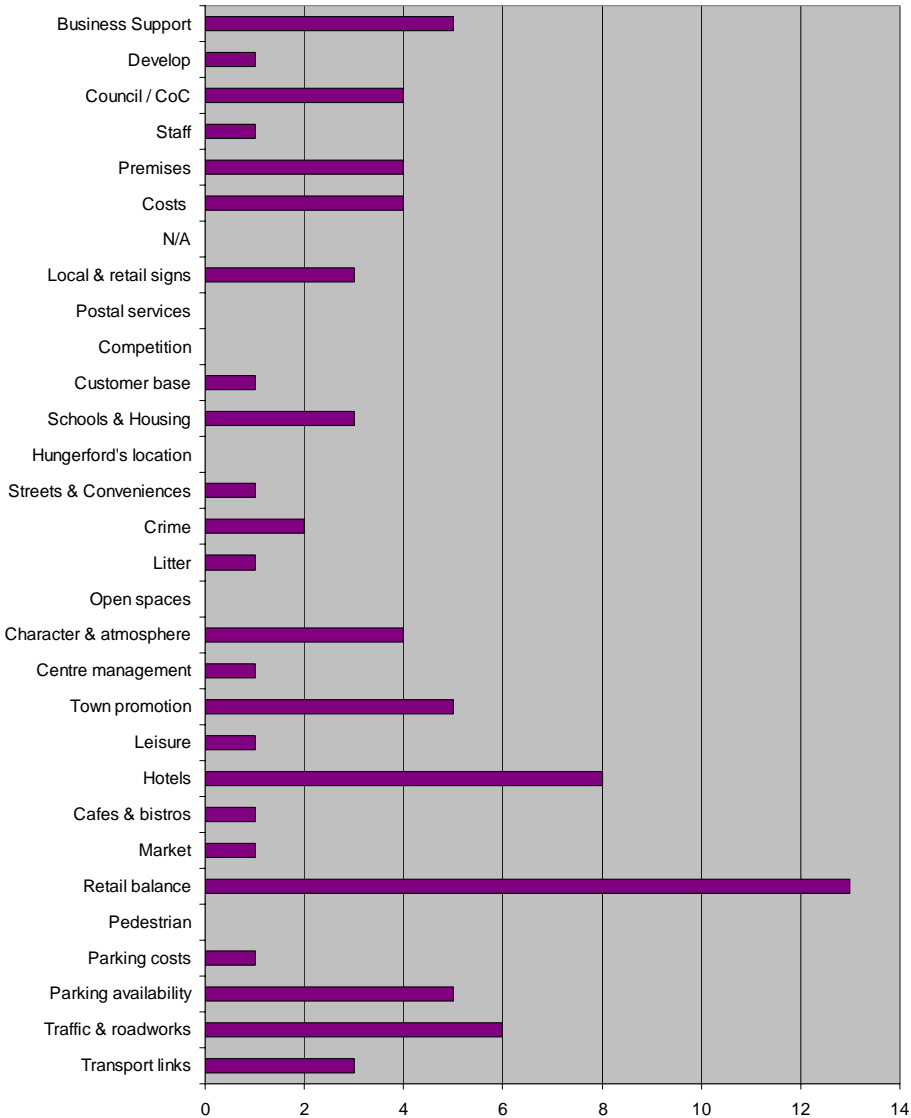
Q25: Drawbacks



Q24: Benefits of Hungerford



Q26: Ideas



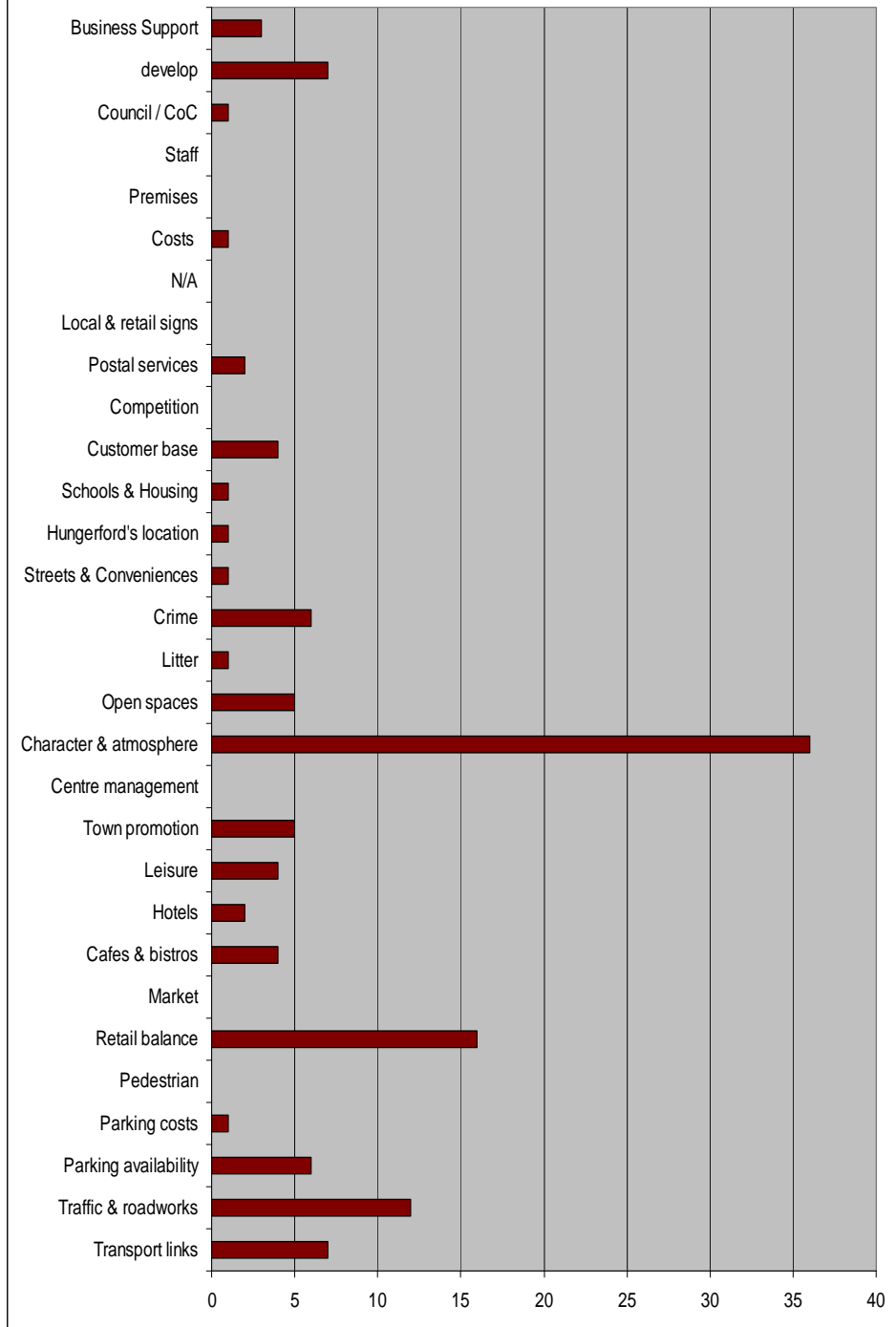
Personal comments

As shown on the chart overleaf, the personal comments people added (listed in Appendix A) were generally consistent with those made in response to other questions. Traffic, roadworks and parking are personal issues as well as business ones. Some business issues are raised again, such as promotion of the town. There was even more emphasis on the value of the town's character (32% of all comments made); the town's character is of major value to businesses and to those who work (or a being recruited to work) in the area.

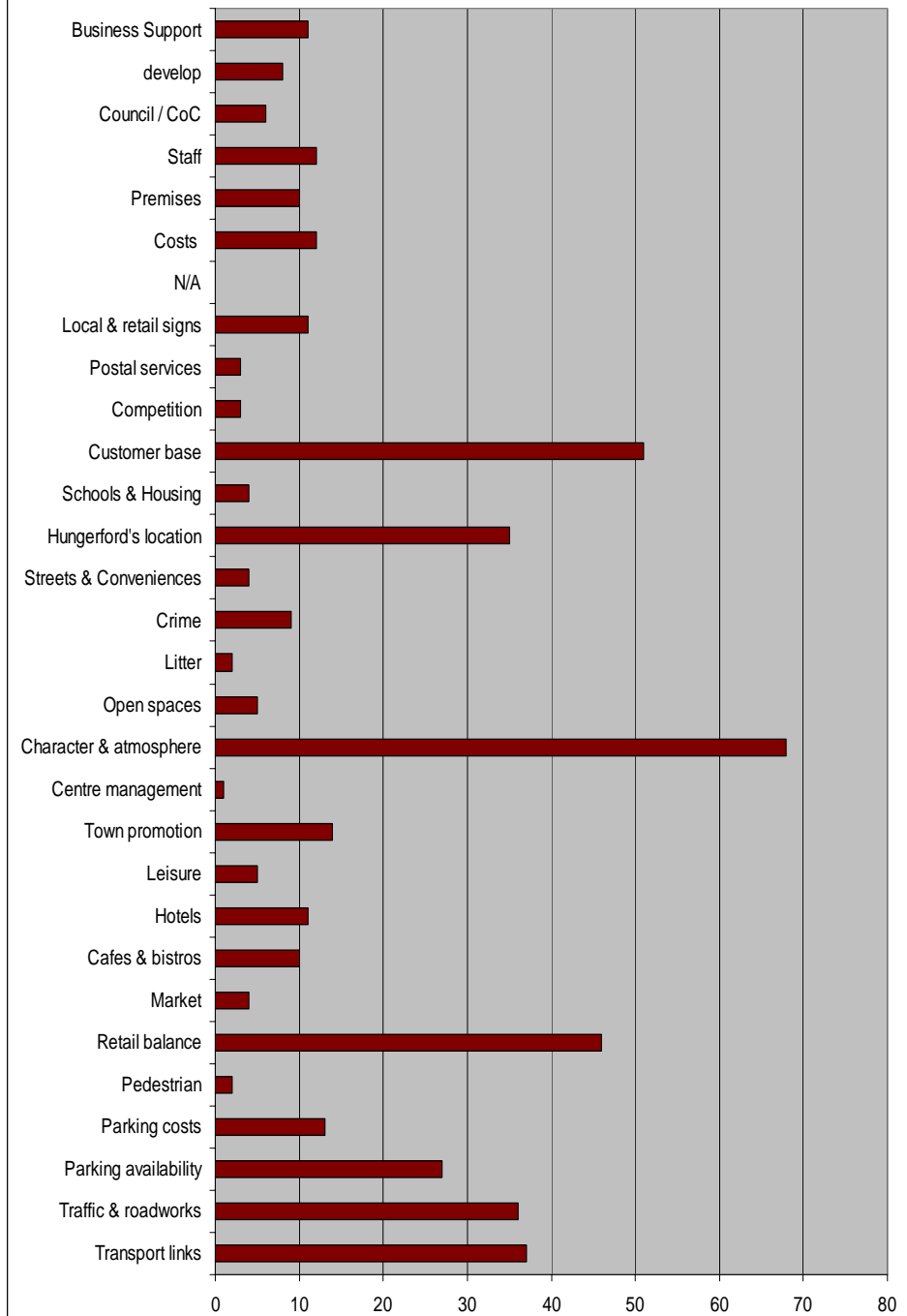
Even in this relatively small sample, a range of issues individual concern are being included (albeit by small numbers of respondents), including crime, litter, the quality of schools and entertainment options. The true level of concern on these issues will have to be gauged as part of the separate residents' survey.

The final chart brings together by topic all comments made in answer to the different questions, irrespective of whether the comment was positive or critical. The character and atmosphere of the town remains the most significant topic, though inevitably comments are distributed more evenly.

Q29: Personal comments



All comments + & -



Appendix A: Comments Made

Question 19: Retail ideas

fewer antique shops
good coffee shop

Pasta bar?
Replace dead trees

Improve market
Farmers market
Cheaper parking - £2 for staff!

Short term free parking in High Street
Cheaper parking
Maintain character of buildings
Change some shop fronts to be more in character
Good as it is
Better bus links

Allow A boards

Divert A338
Cheaper parking
Town guide in High Street

More parking space
More and better car parking

Improve parking
foot bridge in Bridge St.
Encourage more small independent retailers

Aim for 'specialist shopping'

Retail balance?

Tourist information centre

Parking!

No more roadworks in High Street

Cafes?

No more obstructions in high Street for building

More space for pedestrians

Stop digging up the road

Force cars into car parks

Stop illegal parking

More variety of shops

Keep lid on parking cost

Get rid of fast food vans

Stop development not in character
(eg. new car garage)

Make access & parking easy

Repair derelict buildings (eg. 6
Bridge Street)

Longer parking in High Street

Able to buy just about anything

Reduce rates for High Street
parking

Improves signage

Fewer roadworks

Stop lorries blocking High Street

Better traffic flow

More restaurants

Signs and map for canal &
footpaths etc.

Too many charity shops in prime
sites

Improve public toilet facilities

More free High Street parking

More customer parking, less
residents'

More signs [eg. to Courtyard]?

Encourage more independent
traders

less through-traffic congestion

Q24: Benefits of Hungerford

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| More parking space | Interesting rural/town mix |
| Nice town | Parking (upper high st) |
| Good catchment area | Near home |
| Good road access | Little congestion outside rush hour |
| local knowledge | Live here |
| Hungerford is between other branches | Plenty of good business |
| Affluent area | Good access to motorway |
| No direct competition | 50% staff live locally, less travelling |
| Local clients | Able to train people close to home |
| Connections to London & M4 | Meet needs of local people |
| Good working environment | Centrally placed, nationally |
| Well known in area | Client base |
| | Country town, but good communications |
| Easy access | road links |
| Affluent population | Antiques area |
| Nice community | Easy recruitment |
| Access to motorway | Been here a number of years |
| Nice place | Good car parking |
| Good communications | Location |
| Sound Area | Passing trade |
| Local repeat business | High Street position |
| Good parking | Good number of larger (houses?) as clients |
| | Hungerford centrally located for SE |
| Friendly atmosphere | Good transport network |
| Good local clientele | Lack of competition |
| central location in region | Close to employees homes |
| Central for surrounding area (?) | Good transport links |
| Good east-west links | Pleasant location |
| Railway station | Pleasant town |
| Really nice town | Close to home |
| Good transport links | Access to M4/A303 |
| Customers willing to travel | Easy road connections |
| Quality of life | |
| Close to patients | |

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Can commute by train | Healthy area |
| Commuters use us | Good communications |
| Good road & rail links | pleasant working environment |
| Not too many chains | Has other independent retailers |
| Attracts visitors | Hungerford centrally located |
| Station, so clients can leave cars for repair | Character of town |
| M4 close | Easy reach of London |
| Rich clients in area | Nationwide communications |
| Specialist antiques shopping | Plenty of visitors |
| Wealthy area | Right location for small bookshop |
| Increasing population | Near main client base |
| Local knowledge | Assessable customers & staff |
| Long term staff live locally | Nice town |
| Good customer base | (Hungerford's) location |
| M4 & rail links | We provide a needed service |
| Close to home | easy road/rail access |
| Easy access to M4/A34 | Good demographic mix |
| Easily accessible for deliveries | Tourists on boats |
| Central to Newbury/Marlborough area | Villages around (catchment area?) |
| Good clientele | Access to Heathrow |
| easy commuting | Easy M4 Access |
| Low key atmosphere | Easy access, quite good parking |
| Good communications | Other antique shops nearby |
| Pleasant environment | Easy parking |
| Pleasant environment | People generally V well off |
| High Street location | Personal convenience |
| Central base for area | Only vet in Hungerford |
| Poor competition | Central for staff |
| Nice surroundings | Good central location |
| Good staff | Local customer base, word of mouth |
| Other food outlets | good parking |
| Ease of parking | people know we are here |
| Littlecote House attracts short stays | Nice working environment |
| Nice town/environment | Live close by |
| Reasonable rent | Nice place to be in |
| Good transport links | Non-standard town centre |
| M4 Access | Access to M4 |
| | Good central access to South |
| Interesting location | England |

Q25: Drawbacks of Hungerford

| | |
|---|--|
| "Antiques only" | Lack of diverse shops |
| Typical shopper not interested in independent specialist stores | Public transport for staff from Marlborough/Swindon |
| People don't know here | A city would have more to offer |
| | High Street always blocked with traffic |
| Quiet 'foot flow' | Poor business services |
| Small town for specialist stores | Only one major company/employer in the area |
| Not much local trade | Small catchment area |
| Most families don't shop locally | Regarded as the backwater of Berkshire |
| Parking | Delivery lorries blocking access to Station Yard etc. |
| Too many antique shops | More restaurants needed for staff & clients |
| Little variety of affordable office space | |
| Not enough advertising for Hungerford as shopping destination | Parking |
| Traffic a nightmare | Poor signage |
| | Not enough cheap long term parking |
| Car parking price increase | |
| Limited road access to town (bus??) | More local services needed |
| Emphasis on retail means few local clients | Parking |
| Building works damage aesthetics and access | Long drive for visitors to office |
| Closed premises due to delays | High cost of housing |
| Have to go to London for meetings | Not enough people |
| | Difficult to trade West & North, county border a barrier?? |
| Lack of right price industrial units | Fairly rural location means few local technical staff |
| Recruiting staff | Town getting quieter every year |
| Traffic | Difficulty getting trained staff |
| Office space | Getting back from London in the evenings |
| Risk of burglary | Poor signs to leisure centre |
| Not enough people visiting | Low availability of housing |
| High Street rents too high | Parking is terrible |
| Parking | V slow repair of phone line |
| Poor tourist info | Health & safety restrictions affecting recruitment |
| fragmented support from local council | Cost of housing affects recruitment |
| Roadworks | Cost of housing affects recruitment |
| High business rate increase | |

Not enough construction trainees
leaving school/college
Expensive parking
[Limited?] Population
Poor public transport links with
outlying areas
Charnham lane looks run down
high cost of living & thus wages
makes it hard to compete

10 miles from Newbury & many
customers
Distance from London
Road works
Some recruitment difficulties

26: Improving Hungerford

recycling programme
Improve image of small independent specialist retailers
More small business units

More upmarket shops
Better public awareness
Parking!
More variety shops
Signposting for hotels at M4 junction 2010+ !!

better pubs and restaurants

Hotels signs in town
better hotels
Speciality shopping mall
Need a taxi rank & better bus
Good quality hospitality venues
Business resources
Has most of what business needs

Is land available for expansion?
Surfeit of solicitors & accountants!

Is land available for expansion?
Stop collecting rubbish from High Street in middle of day
Has most of what business needs
Balance between retail & office about right

Joined up thinking
Town Council should keep it a pretty town to visit
Better train links, esp. evenings from London
Get rid of wires and poles across High Street
Better car parking
A bypass
Local businesses using local businesses
Add a go karting track!
More variety of retail shops in High Street
Better hotels and restaurants
More family shops, less antiques
More local services needed

Town Council should stop fighting and look at area as a whole

Affordable housing
Restore the Bear Hotel
More balanced blend and type of retail shops
More parking
Better signage to industrial estate
More business premises
Safer car parking with security
better traffic movement
Better, more frequent & reliable rail service
To improve prosperity, the town must LOOK prosperous
More business services
More low cost housing
More housing
Receptionist training?
Cheaper housing for young unskilled
Tidy it up
Better retail shops to attract people wanting to work here
Don't change it very much
proposed marine should bring in people

More free parking
Main post office, offering all services

Don't make it like Newbury
More specialised shops
Advertise the town outside the area as a place to visit

Make the traffic flow!

better hotels
Good meeting rooms with full service
Improve hotels

Good hotel with modern facilities
Cheaper housing for young unskilled

more eating places
Receptionist training?
Better police service
Tidy it up

Don't change it very much
proposed marine should bring in
people
More free parking
Main post office, offering all services
Don't make it like Newbury
More specialised shops
Better retail shops to attract people
wanting to work here

Q29: Personal comments

Good chain bistro
Needs updating
End roadworks
Post box in upper High St
Promote town in surrounding villages
Don't want too many changes
Get residents to support independent shops
Friendly, welcoming town

Love small market town atmosphere
Good parking
Unspoilt town centre good
Continual road works are a real pain
Parking cost high
Pleasant area to live and work in
Nice friendly town
Blocking service area for canal development bad
More contact with other businesses
Need to retain atmosphere whilst improving/growing
Long delays at level crossings in area.
Unplanned housing
Town image is 'staid'
common / green areas
HF has lost its way in recent years of Marlborough
More thought to parking capacity

Nowhere better!

Very attractive town, friendly people
Good location, know for products like ours
More policing
Congestion in High Street (inc Somerfields)
Poor range of retail

Some shop fronts in very poor state

Limited speciality shops
Continual High St roadworks

No family entertainment
High proportion of pop do not shop locally

Poor reputation of JoG school
Don't want atmosphere lost
Interesting shops
Friendly atmosphere
Ban parking on high Street near Bear
Staff parking permits?

Worry about crime and burglary
No real improvements (?)
Make sure HF retains market town character
Town Guide good
Trade dropping off last few years
Do not make most of best asset, canal
Good size of town
Business is terrible, due to weak dollar
Would consider a retail outlet in town

Shop lifting a major problem
Ban High street parking by Bear

Easy connections to M4

Scenery and open spaces
How about a cinema club?
Poor litter collection a problem
Lack of discipline & self-discipline

Reasonable sports facilities
No more roadworks!
Town resources need updating in line with commercial businesses
Post Office has excellent early deliveries
Traffic is the main problem, and could be easily sorted
Lovely hotel restaurants
Used to be antiques, but this is declining
Closeness of countryside
Ban rush hour parking on Bridge Street near Bear
More activities & focus on teenagers' part. W/E and eves.
Keep & expand LOCAL policing
Need to balance new shops and keeping atmosphere
Smallness of developments

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>beautiful location</p> <p>Love community spirit</p> <p>More good eating places</p> <p>Very few good shops</p> <p>Very few good eating places</p> <p>Marlborough has developed well in comparison</p> <p>Concerned at heavy lorries coming through</p> <p>Charge for Somerfield car park, would make people park elsewhere and use other shops</p> <p>Car parking free in High St. for 10mins then more expensive</p> <p>Good road & rail communications</p> <p>Speeding traffic in Church Street - needs traffic controls?</p> <p>How was the new garage allowed amongst all the listed buildings?</p> <p>Hungerford has station, so should do better</p> <p>Lovely place to work</p> <p>Improve train frequency and time to London</p> <p>Use Marlborough as an example</p> <p>Lovely Town</p> <p>Generally friendly market town, adequate facilities</p> <p>Eating places - tables on the High Street</p> <p>Would like to know of business or help groups to voice opinions</p> <p>As an outsider, it's the overwhelming sense of community</p> <p>Use Newbury for most business services</p> <p>Wine bars, not pubs</p> <p>Railway is great facility</p> <p>Definitely need a closer DIY centre</p> <p>Village atmosphere but town facilities</p> <p>Better public transport to villages & Marlborough</p> <p>Good, cheap parking</p> <p>Constant road works</p> <p>Nice place to be</p> | <p>Do not like slow traffic movement</p> <p>Fewer antique and charity shops</p> <p>Town looks rather neglected</p> <p>An extremely friendly town</p> <p>Nice little market town with nice people</p> <p>Only 1 decent supermarket</p> <p>Public toilets in Church Street need improving</p> <p>Like vibrant community</p> <p>More practical and useful shops</p> <p>High Street needs to be much more attractive</p> <p>Need to differentiate Hungerford from other towns</p> <p>Great place to work</p> <p>Lovely place & people</p> <p>Town is deteriorating wrt Marlborough etc.</p> <p>A feeling that the minority of locals have their voice heard above the majority</p> <p>High street must offer more to draw visitors</p> <p>A few more shops to give [balance]</p> <p>Sales are declining but rent put up 28% plus more next time, plus rates</p> <p>No regular busses from town & villages</p> <p>Wider choice of eating and coffee shops</p> <p>Hungerford appears to discourage retail development</p> <p>Police never on duty when needed</p> <p>Good safe friendly place</p> <p>Antiques and estate agents dominate High Street - move them to Bridge Street!</p> <p>Need more shops & wider range goods</p> <p>Very scenic area</p> <p>Lovely place to live and work - must keep it that way</p> <p>Still a rural location</p> <p>Good pubs but no good hotel for foreign visitors</p> <p>Common & marsh wonderful facilities</p> |
|---|---|

Dismayed West Berks permit central government housing targets to over-rule local wishes

Shops seem very limited for lunchtime shopping

Wealthy area

Supported Charkha park, but appalled it was subverted for housing
Not convinced large office/warehouses better than smaller units for local employment
Would benefit from less development, particularly infill

Appendix B: Covering Letter & Questionnaire

Covering Letter

Hungerford and District Business Survey Questionnaire

As you may well have heard, Hungerford is in the process of developing a new Town Plan, a shared vision of the town's future, shaped by the people who live in the area and use the retail, leisure, professional and public services located within the town.

The Market Towns Initiative was established by the Countryside Agency to help revitalise the market towns as rural service centres in the 21st century. Once we have completed our plan, funding is available to take forward the vision and tackle the issues that the people who live and work here want to see addressed.

The initiative starts with a 'health check' (carried out by volunteers) of the town's economy, resources and social assets, including a survey of business needs. As part of this process, we are distributing this questionnaire to all the businesses in the area. We would be very grateful if an appropriate person in your organisation could spend a short time completing and returning it as soon as possible, using the reply-paid envelope provided.

I have volunteered to coordinate the survey for the economy group, which also includes Chris Ticehurst, Ian Thompson and Jackie Penny, so if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or one of the other members of the group. More information is also available on the town website, <http://www.hungerfordtowncouncil.gov.uk>

The completed questionnaires will be confidential to the members of the economy group, the information will only be used for this survey, and only general findings will be reported. Nevertheless, if you would prefer not to answer a question, or if it does not seem relevant, just miss it out. Including the organisation name and your contact details is optional, and we will email you a copy of our report if you wish.

This survey is a vital part of the process, and it is important that we have your organisations' contribution. Your opinions will influence what happens next. Thank you for your support.

David Collier
david@davidcollier.me.uk, 01488 680712

Your Business

1. Which sector best describes your business? Tick one.

- | | | |
|---|---|-----|
| Agriculture & related businesses/trades | A | () |
| Construction & related businesses/trades | B | () |
| Manufacturing & related businesses/trades | C | () |
| Retail, including eating and drinking places | D | () |
| Finance, insurance and property | E | () |
| Services, including hotels, health, and professional services | F | () |
| Other (please specify) | G | () |

2. How many employees have you? Tick one.

- | | | |
|--------------|---|-----|
| 5 or less | A | () |
| 6-10 | B | () |
| 11-15 | C | () |
| 16-20 | D | () |
| 21-50 | E | () |
| More than 50 | F | () |

3. How do you expect the number of employees to change over the next 3 years?

4. What are likely to be the main reasons for the change?

Your Workforce

5. How easy is it usually to recruit staff in the local area? Tick one.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Very easy | A | () |
| Quite easy | B | () |
| Quite difficult | C | () |
| Very difficult | D | () |

6. It is difficult to recruit any particular type of staff locally?

7. What are the main barriers to recruiting staff locally?

8. Is the local provision of vocational courses meeting employers' needs? If not, what is missing?

9. If you can, estimate the % of staff at your location who live:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 3 miles way (in or close to Hungerford) | A | % |
| Between 3 and 15 miles away (e.g. Newbury, Marlborough) | B | % |
| Over 15 miles away | C | % |

Your Premises

10. How easy was it to find suitable premises? Tick one.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----|
| Very easy | A | () |
| Quite easy | B | () |
| Quite difficult | C | () |
| Very difficult | D | () |

11. Have you any comments on the availability of premises for new businesses?

12. What were the main reasons you chose your current premises?

13. How satisfied are you with your current premises? Tick one.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----|
| Very satisfied | A | () |
| Quite satisfied | B | () |
| Quite dissatisfied | C | () |
| Very dissatisfied | D | () |

14. How will your company's need for space locally change in the next 3 years? Tick one, and indicate % change if you can.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-----|---|
| Probably grow | A | () | % |
| About the same | B | () | |
| Probably reduce | C | () | % |

15. What do you expect to happen to your premises' rent over the next 3 years? Tick one, and indicate % change if you can.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---|-----|---|
| Probably increase | A | () | % |
| About the same | B | () | |
| Probably reduce | C | () | % |

Retail & Town Centre

Only complete this page if you are a town centre retailer (retailing includes eating and drinking places).

16. Which of the following best describes your retail business?

- | | | |
|---|---|-----|
| Building and garden supplies, hardware | A | () |
| Food stores | B | () |
| General merchandise | C | () |
| Automotive dealers and service stations | D | () |
| Clothing and accessories | E | () |
| Home furnishings and equipment | F | () |
| Eating and drinking | G | () |
| Other (please specify) | H | () |

17. How confident are you about future trading? Tick one.

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|-----|
| Very confident | A | () |
| Quite confident | B | () |
| Quite pessimistic | C | () |
| Very pessimistic | D | () |

18. Where is your business located? Tick one.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-----|
| Hungerford, in the High Street | A | () |
| Hungerford, on the A4 | B | () |
| Elsewhere in Hungerford | C | () |
| Other (please specify) | D | () |

19. How could the town centre be improved to benefit retailers?

Business Services

20. How satisfied are you with the availability of these business services in the area?

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|----------------------------|-----------|------|-----|------|-----------|
| | Very poor | Poor | OK | Good | Very Good |
| 1 Banking services | () | () | () | () | () |
| 2 Other financial services | () | () | () | () | () |
| 3 Office support services | () | () | () | () | () |
| 4 Conference facilities | () | () | () | () | () |
| 5 Training providers | () | () | () | () | () |

21. Are any business services that are important to you not available locally?

22. Have you made use of any sources of business advice and support in the last 3 years e.g. Business Link? If so, which, and how useful have they been?

23. How do you use the Internet for business? Tick all that apply.

- We do not use the Internet A ()
- We have a broadband connection B ()
- We have a company web site C ()
- We sell goods or services online D ()

Businesses in Hungerford

24. What are the main **benefits** to your business from being located in the Hungerford area?

25. What are the main **drawbacks** to your business from being located in the Hungerford area?

26. What do you think would most improve the Hungerford area as a location for businesses?

27. Tick any that apply. Contact details are optional.

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| I would be willing to be interviewed by the survey team | Yes | () |
| I would like more information on Hungerford 2010+ | Yes | () |
| Please email me a copy of the survey report | Yes | () |

Organisation

Contact name

Phone number

Email

Your Personal Comments

28. Are you a resident of Hungerford?

29. Have you any personal comments on the things that you like about living or working in Hungerford, and about things that could be improved?

You have now completed the questionnaire. Thank you!