



Creating Headcorn's Neighbourhood Plan: What does the evidence say?

December 2013



Results of the Business Survey

A Presentation by Michael Jefferys FRICS

Headcorn`s Business Community

- **143 Businesses inside Parish Boundary.**
- **+ a further 21 Businesses in Headcorn Ward**
- **+ a further 43 Businesses in Rural Service Centre Catchment area (5km radius)**

Source: Headcorn Parish Council Business Database.

Top Ten Business Types in Headcorn

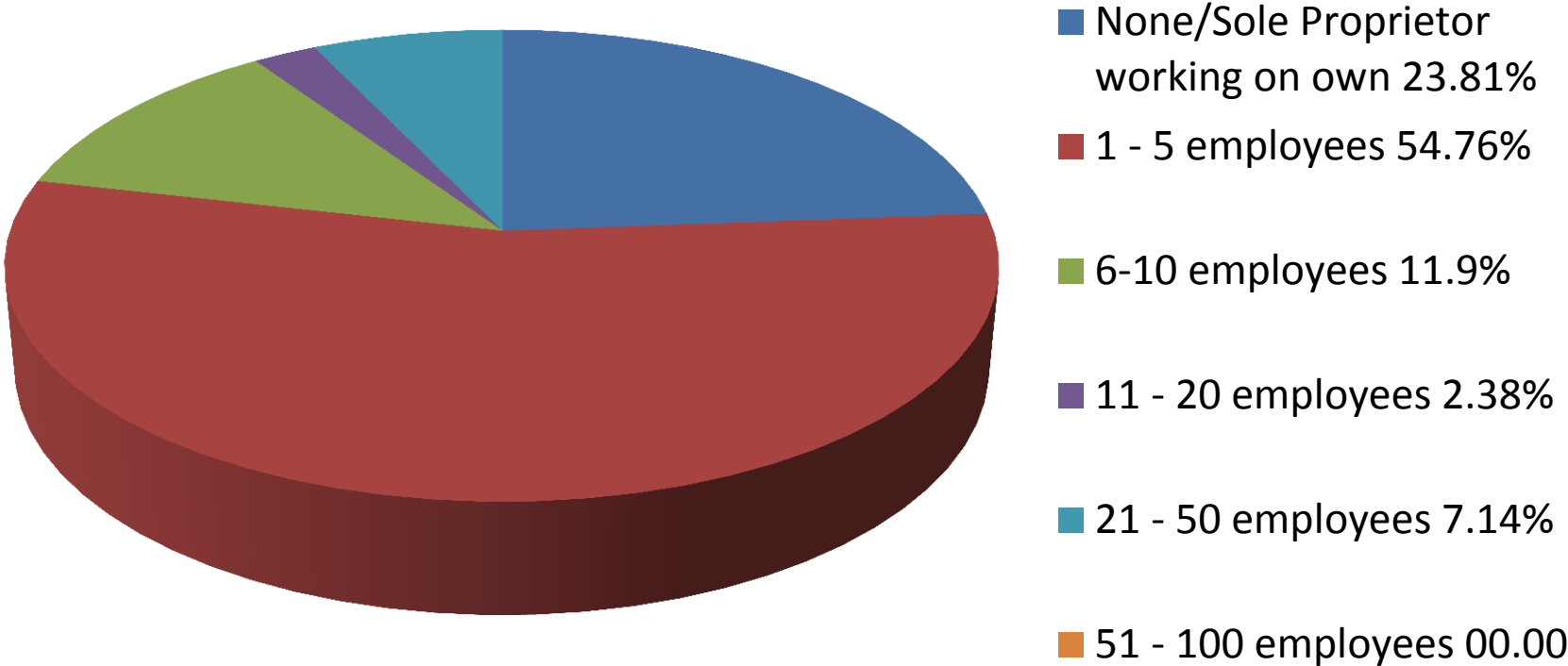
1. Retail outlets; shops etc., 34
2. Agriculture, farming & fisheries 9
3. Public Houses, cafés & restaurants 8
- Hair & beauty related 8
- Leisure related 8
- Manufacturing 8
7. Medical & health related 7
- Building & allied trades 7
9. Service Industries 6
10. Real Estate Services 5
- Others 18

Who completed the survey?

- **A Response Rate of 35.7%**
- **A profile of the business types that responded to our Survey.**
- **Retail trades & shops 19.05%**
- **Agriculture, farming and fishing 9.52%**
- **Professional, scientific & technical 7.14%**
- **Medical Services 7.14%**
- **Transport, storage and distribution 4.76%**
- **Tourism, leisure and crafts 4.76%**
- **Real Estate Services 4.76%**

Headcorn – A community of Small Businesses

Employees/Staff



How do you rate Headcorn?

- 70.58% of business community rate Headcorn either 3 – 4 as a place to do business. Based on a Scale of 1 – 5 where 5 is Very Good.
- Initial conclusions indicate that we do not have an immediate pressing problem with our businesses expanding within the village, but that the Neighbourhood Plan will need to plan for the 57% of existing businesses who have current concerns and to try and provide for likely future expansion; and to reflect future population growth in the village!

So what are the constraints on expansion for Headcorn's businesses?

SERIOUS CONSTRAINTS:

(at least 55% saw as a constraint)

- Availability of parking
- Quality of broadband
- Cost of council tax and business rates in MBC
- Reliability of sewage and storm drainage system
- Planning regime in MBC
- Availability of suitable buildings

So what are the constraints on expansion for Headcorn's businesses?

POSSIBLE CONSTRAINTS:

(Constraints that impact a significant minority)

- The availability of suitable office space
- The availability of suitable retail space
- The availability of suitable workshops
- The availability of suitable land
- Cost of property
- Cost of renting
- Quality of the road network
- Ability to put up adequate signage
- Quality of public transport system

So what are the constraints on expansion for Headcorn's businesses?

THINGS THAT ARE NOT A CONSTRAINT:

(at least 55% marked as not a constraint)

- Reliability of the power supply
- Supply of skilled labour
- Supply of unskilled labour
- Availability of suitable housing

Thinking now about availability of business space in Headcorn.

- 57.5% think general availability of suitable buildings in village is either of **SOME OR SERIOUS CONSTRAINT ON EXPANSION**
- 62.5% of businesses think that the *“Planning Regime”* at Maidstone Borough Council is some constraint or a serious constraint on expansion of their businesses.

Should existing sites with Planning Permission or Established Use for Business Use be prevented from Change of Use?

An overwhelming 75.61% said NO!

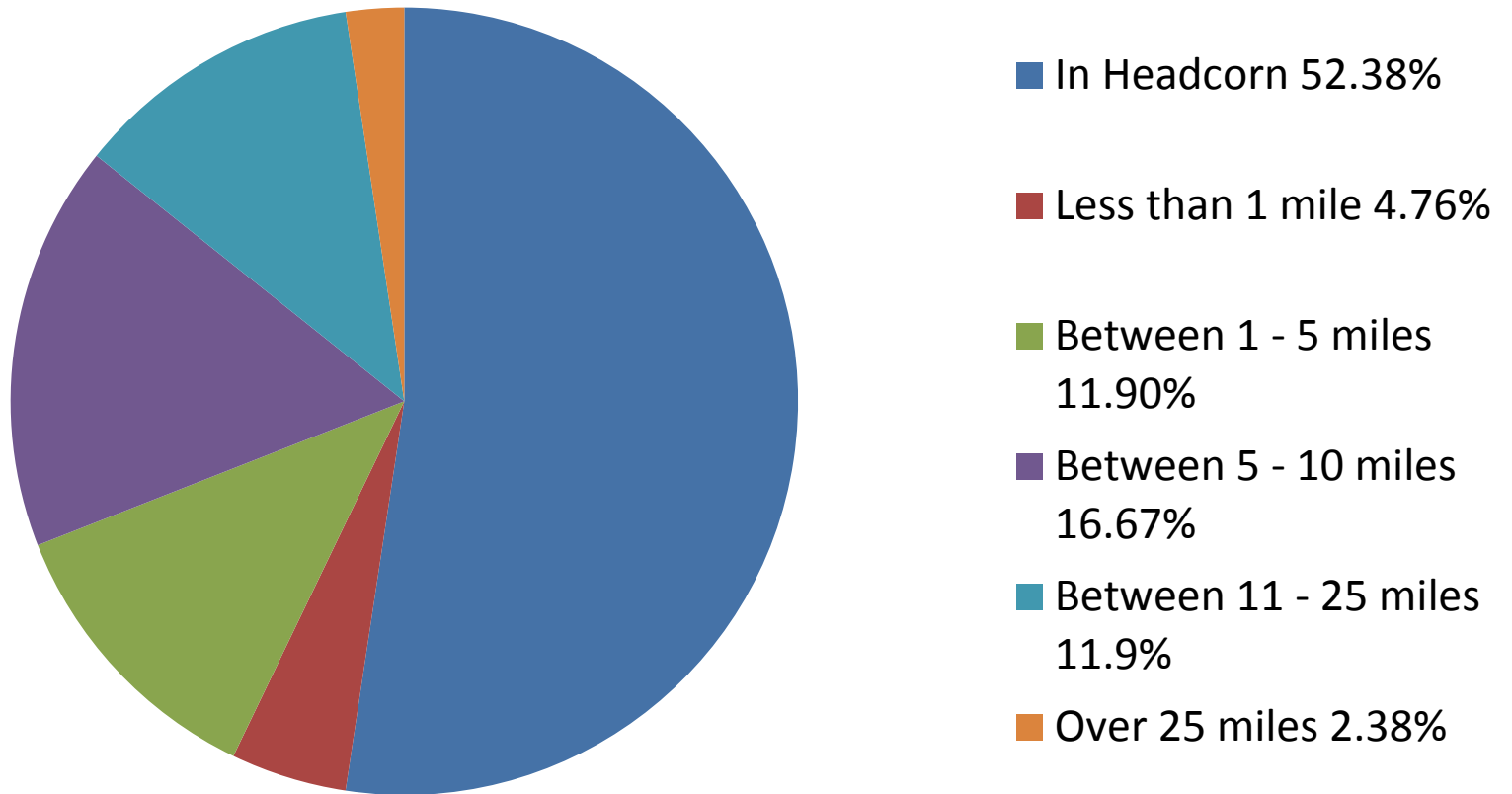
- Was this about change of use from different business usages?
- Or about change of use from business to residential?

Sustainability

- Headcorn`s Businesses are enviably sustainable in terms of how close their proprietors and staff live.
- Neighbourhood Plan must seek to keep our village sustainable and,
- Where possible **IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY**

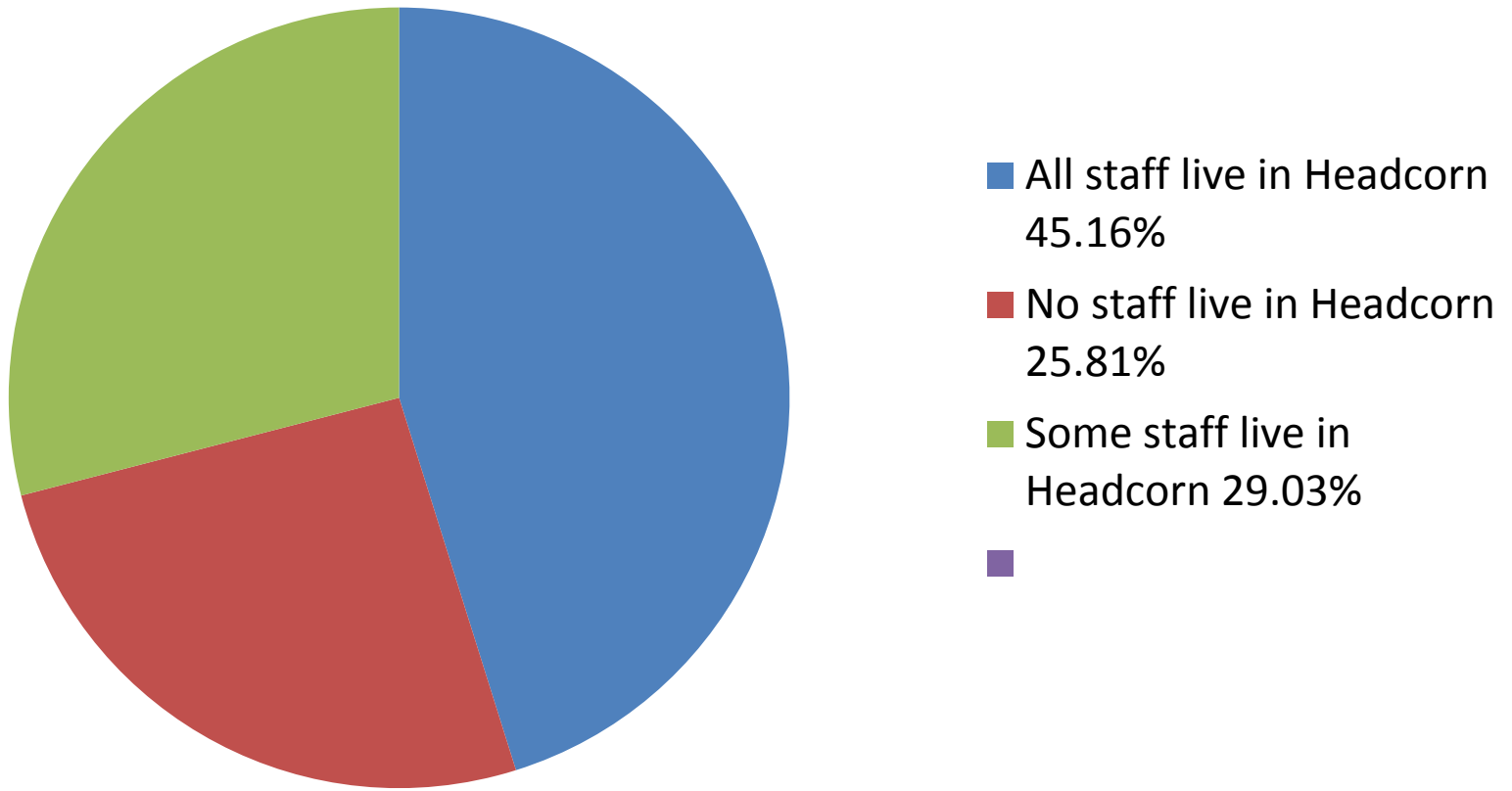
Where do business owners live?

Where you live



Where do your staff live?

In Headcorn/Not in Headcorn



Availability of staff in Headcorn

64.1% of businesses say that availability of qualified or skilled staff IS NOT A CONSTRAINT

71.79% businesses say that availability of unskilled staff IS NOT A CONSTRAINT

We seem to be doing rather well on providing staff for our Village`s businesses!

How could Neighbourhood Plan encourage working from home?

- Better Broadband Service 47.6%
- Existing Business not suited to home working. 14.28%
- Did not know. 23.8%

Local Demand for your products/services

- 23.8% said 50%+ of demand from Headcorn itself.
- 33.33% said 50%+ of demand from 10mile radius.
- 19.05% said 50%+ of demand from Kent
- 11.9% said 50%+ of demand from London & South East.

Should Headcorn become a leading centre for a particular type of business or industry?

Overwhelming 90.24% said NO!

So,

What type of businesses did you say The Neighbourhood Plan should encourage?

What type of businesses should the Neighbourhood Plan encourage?

Your top 5 businesses to be encouraged:

- **Retail Shops 70.73%**
- **Pubs, restaurants & cafés 56.10%**
- **Tourism & Leisure 53.66%**
- **Agriculture, farming & fishing 51.22%**
- **Community Services 43.34%**

What would encourage businesses to locate in Headcorn?

“Top ” concerns:-

- Attention to Parking Issues 20% (34% around High St.)
- Broadband Issues 20%
- Business Space Availability 10%
- Gypsy/Traveller Issues 7.5%
- Better Business Support 5.0%
- Planning Issues 5.0%
- Signage Issues 5.0%
- Property costs 5.0%
- Anti- social behaviour 5.0%

What type of marketing strategy you would like to see for Headcorn?

- Parish Council lobbying of Local and Central Government **32.0%**
- Active Local Business Forum **24.0%**
- Tackling external forces first (i.e. infrastructure) **12.0%**
- Lobbying Statutory Service Providers **8.0%**
- Print based, internet and radio advertising **8.0%**

Your “top ten” wish list!

- Better Parking Provision & Control
- Broadband speed/quality
- Traveller issues
- Types of additional sites provision in Neighbourhood Plan
- Permitting Change of Use
- Size of available space
- Planning issues at National and Local level
- Improvements to High Street & Village centre
- Infrastructure issues (i.e. street lighting & CCTV)
- Housing Needs for staff working in Headcorn Businesses

