

**Charmouth NHP**  
**Draft Report**  
**Service Provider Survey**

1. Introduction

A Questionnaire, shown in Appendix A, was given to Service Providers in Charmouth, including retail outlets, tradesmen, businesses, leisure services and community facilities.

The thirty two responses received have been compiled into a spreadsheet.

The main aim of the Questionnaire was to understand the needs of the Service Providers and knowledge of their customer base. In particular, information was obtained on:

- Capacity to increase the number of customers
- Potential to extend/relocate their service and employ more personnel
- Potential benefit of an increase in local population i.e. more housing

2. Analysis of Questionnaire Responses

Although not every Service Provider completed the whole Questionnaire, the total number of customers per week was over 12,000 although it was recognised, in many cases, these figures varied considerably during the seasons particularly for retail outlets.

Regarding customer location, it was not unsurprising there was a mixed response on this question.

Overall, about 42% of customers came from within the village, but in the case of local shops, pubs, and community facilities the majority of customers came from within the village. An exception to this was the Fish Bar, Bank House cafe and Tennis Club where they reported most of their customers came from outside the village.

The school currently has 41% of its pupils from within the village.

The holiday/caravan parks have the majority of their customers coming from further than 5 miles away.

11 out of the 32 service providers said they were under capacity, which included retail outlets (shops, pubs, post office, pharmacy, etc.) i.e. considerably under use. Shops, particularly in winter months, struggle to be profitable. Most of those Service Providers, who reported to be under capacity, responded positively when asked whether an increase in local population would be beneficial.

All 3 holiday parks saw no benefit with an increase in local population. Overall only 11 out of 32 service providers thought an increase in population would benefit them.

The school has the capability to have 7 class rooms but is currently operating with 5 class rooms, so there is potential to increase: the current number of pupils of 142 is significantly under the school's capacity of over 170 pupils. However, due to the need to manage the school effectively for the pupil numbers, due to financial constraints, they are broadly at capacity for the school structure.

There are aspirations to have a pre-school for 3-4 year olds.

Regarding future extension or relocation of their businesses, most (57%) reported that they were expecting no change or unlikely to change. Exceptions to this were: Herringbone, Fish bar, Seadown Holiday park, Post office, Heritage Coast Centre & The Bank House café. Only 5 require a different local site.

Of the 32 Service Providers who completed the Questionnaire, a total of 77 of their staff were living in the village, 25 were living outside the village but within 5 miles and 29 were living more than 5 miles away. Charmouth school was the single biggest employer, with 20 staff.

Regarding the level of difficulty in recruiting staff the majority of employers (16 in number) didn't have a problem but 5 outlets did have problems including NISA Stores, The Royal Oak Pub, Morgans & the Salon. Some of the shops (e.g. NISA Stores, Fish Bar) also employ teenagers/students.

### 3. Additional Information

The Chair of Traders Association in Charmouth has also provided the following information:-

1. The key issue for traders is surviving the winter months. Lower Business Rates would be a big help but we really need more local customers. i.e. more houses. Maybe 50-100 would secure the village's retail outlets' future for years to come and help us withstand the increasing pressures of internet shopping and local supermarket deliveries which are steadily eating into our turnover. Without more local population the number of shops will slowly reduce until only one or two are left.
2. The local retailers fulfil a really important community function. I know that just Charmouth Stores has daily visits from many elderly people, several times a day from some. The loss of village shops would have an incalculable effect on these people.
3. The other very important thing that Charmouth businesses fulfil is jobs for teenagers. These are really useful in preparing them for their future working lives, teaching them what working is about. A lot of local teenagers have seasonal and longer term jobs locally.

### 4. Conclusion & Summary

- a) Many of the Service Providers, particularly retail outlets and holiday parks rely heavily upon tourism to make their business viable.
- b) Shops struggle in winter months to be profitable and many are under capacity.
- c) It was estimated that approx. 42% of customers/users are within the village.
- d) Only 11 out of the 32 Service providers interviewed said they would benefit from an increase in the local population and the majority of these were retail outlets. It would require a significant increase in the local population to make a positive difference to shops, etc. The school said over time, a sustained increase in young children would enable the school to grow.
- e) Tourism is essential to the village in helping retail outlets to be sustainable.
- f) Service Providers do provide local employment from within the village although this is limited and opportunities to increase employment, with the current Service Providers, are also limited.
- g) Village shops and local facilities have a social benefit to residents and this has been confirmed from the results of the Village Survey (Ref. Q24).

Approx. 50 questionnaires sent out – 32 responses

APPENDIX A

# CHARMOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FACT-FINDING INTERVIEWS

*This survey is directed at the main service providers operating in the Charmouth area, to understand the needs of local services.*

Name:

Organisation:

Length of experience in local area:

Survey date:

**Q:** Can you confirm the main services your organisation provides, and where these are based?

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**Q:** Approximately how many people use your services (weekly average)

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**Q:** Where do most of your "customers" come from? (approximate estimates)

	% from Charmouth parish
	% from outside of Charmouth but within 5 miles
	% from more than 5 miles away

**Q:** can you tell us whether the levels of use of your facilities at the current time mean that they are -

- under capacity (there is considerable under use)
- broadly at capacity
- over capacity (you are turning away customers)

Please give more detail here if you can:

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**Q:** would an increase in the local population be likely to benefit your service?

- yes – it would improve services for existing customers
- slightly – it would help retain service levels
- no – we would not be able to cater for the growth and the additional population could cause a decline in standards
- Other (please explain below)

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**Q:** are you looking to extend or relocate your services in the next 15 years?

- Yes – regardless of population change
- Possibly if required through population increase
- No - unlikely to change
- No - likely to close

If yes / possibly, please tell us whether this would be:

- Within the existing site
- Requiring a larger site in the local area
- Re-locating outside the area

If you would need to extend your site or find another site locally, please tell us the type and size of site that would be needed.

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**Q:** Where do most of your staff live? (approximate estimates)

	Number of employees living in Charmouth parish
	Number of employees living outside but within 5 miles of Charmouth
	Number of employees living more than 5 miles away

**Q:** Do you have difficulty recruiting staff due to the lack of available affordable housing in the local area?

	Yes
	Only sometimes
	Rarely / never

## AND FINALLY...

**Q:** Is there any other potentially useful information you can tell us about your experiences in general that may be useful for us to consider in preparing our neighbourhood plan?

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Please return this form to.....by

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Thank you for your help