

Business Consultation

There are about a hundred businesses in Darley Dale, ranging in size from one sole trader to employing dozens. They are spread widely rather than concentrated in major business districts, though there are nucleus areas at Molyneux Business Park, Old Road and a row of shops at Broadwalk on the A6.

A questionnaire, shown following, was sent out with stamped addressed envelopes to over ninety businesses to specifically ask for views and how their needs might be addressed by the Parish Council.

Fifteen completed questionnaires were returned and a summary of their contents follows.

Summary of results of business questionnaire

Responses were returned from 15 of the 95 business questionnaires sent out, including one no longer operating.

1. The businesses responding had been operating in Darley Dale ranging between 4 and 67 years, averaging 21 years.
2. Ranging from one self-employed to 110 employees, 43% of the businesses employ fewer than 5 people.
3. The “positives” of running a business in Darley Dale included “good central location”, “pleasant countryside”, “loyal customer base”, “lovely position and area”, “good location to work”.
4. The “negatives” focused on lack of sufficient parking in 28% of the replies. Other negatives included “poor mobile reception”, “no bank”, “loss of nearest post office”, “A6 traffic jams”, “no university”, “not having wider range of supporting shops”, “no public transport (further out)”, “not able to recruit qualified staff”, “distance from main traffic routes”, “frequent disruption on A6”.
5. As a place to do business, the average score was above 8 out of 10.
6. Responses to what would help your business most included “signage to business”, “reduce business rates”, “reduce paperwork”, “improve traffic flow”, “improve public transport”, “create more parking”, “interest free loans”, “glass walkway in front of shops”, “remove central bollards in chesterfield road”, “free mention on website”, “business networking events”.
7. Asked how the parish council could help, responses were limited to “don’t know”, no response to the question, “keep business rates low”, “improve parking”, “provide designated parking spaces”.
8. The final question invited any other observations and elicited three responses not repeating their other answers – “pleasant place with large customer catchment”, “pleasant place to work”, “great area, low crime, good socio-economic”, “winter gritting handled very well”, “bank closure is blow to business community”.

The results seem to show that businesses generally are pleased to be based in Darley Dale, regarding it as a good and pleasant location. Insufficient parking was frequently highlighted, and this was a specific issue which businesses thought that the parish council could address.