

## Milborne Port Parish Plan

# **Documentation supporting the Economic Development Plan for Milborne Port**



# MILBORNE PORT PARISH PLAN

## 1 The Economy Theme

**The Milborne Port Parish Plan has three elements – Environment, Community and Economy. This set of documents was commissioned to support the Economic element. It draws on evidence (detailed in the References section at the end of Part 3 and described in Part 6) to make recommendations for an Action Plan. The recommendations need to be exposed to a prioritisation process**

The work was undertaken for and with the Milborne Port Parish Planning Group, with the practical support of the Milborne Port Town Clerk and officers from South Somerset District Council, especially the Area East Regeneration Officer.

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## 2 The Economy of Milborne Port – An Overview

### ***Introduction***

Milborne Port had a long history of leather related industry that came to an end with the closure of the second of the two large tanneries in 1986. Since then, the disused tannery sites at West Hill increasingly became an eyesore in the centre of the village. When the Johnson Stalbridge laundry replaced Ensor's glove factory and tannery it became by far the biggest local employer. Clark House, on the same site, is a business centre that offers some employment. But the greater part of the site is currently (2009) being developed for housing and the contaminants associated with leather industries have been cleaned up to the benefit of the environment. In the process, the site has lost much of its employment potential, despite efforts to secure such uses. The river flowing through the site was once heavily polluted by the tanneries but now flows as Pud Brook cleanly through the historic Saxon area of the village and under the A30.

As Milborne Port made the transition from working town to rural village community it suffered a legacy of industrial dereliction, now at last being revived by new buildings. Other established buildings (the old school, the Red Cross Centre, and Wingrove Tannery for example) still provided employment even though their original purposes become redundant. But many others have been converted more profitably for housing uses, and large buildings likely to become available for business uses are now few in number. There is no allocation in the Local Plan for new employment land.

Residents of the village benefit from a good range of local services; a GP surgery (soon to move to new, bigger premises in the village), pharmacist, library, post office, vet, garage, pubs and clubs – all of which provide employment for local people. But the village has lost several much-valued retailers over the years. People still mourn the loss of the bank a few years ago, and the baker in 2003. Businesses that do not own the building they occupy may become vulnerable as house prices increase. Little wonder that many in the village welcome the additional retail space that is planned in the tannery redevelopment.

In all there are estimated to be about 80 businesses in Milborne Port, many of which are owned by, or employ, local people and buy some local goods and services.

### ***The Nature of Milborne Port Businesses***

There is a good spread of businesses in Milborne Port, with no over dependence on one sector or another, and their distribution is broadly similar to the rest of South Somerset. For a rural area, relatively few are employed in agricultural work. Although 22% of businesses are from the "Construction" sector, local builders tend to be small in scale [1]. Most of them are smaller, one man, enterprises that work together in an effective informal network. Similarly, the "Catering and accommodation" sector seems proportionately large, but it includes several seasonal bed and breakfast establishments. Newer, IT based businesses are well represented in the village [1]. This broad spread promises some resilience to changes in the economy.

Two out of three interviewed businesses employed less than 5 people, and nearly all the others employ between 5 and 20 people. Most staff employed here work full time, and some casual and seasonal work is provided too [1].

Recent attempts to form a Milborne Port Business Association have not been successful, and neither was there a great appetite for one amongst local business during the business survey [1]. Such an organisation could represent the town's economic requirements to, for example, South Somerset District Council and other agencies where an independent voice of local business is required.

All the talk of the support that good ICT can offer local business in rural communities seems to be bearing fruit. Broadband has opened up new business opportunities that many businesses, large and small, in Milborne Port, actively exploit.

### ***Local Shops***

The local retail sector is concentrated on the High Street. Over the years, the number of retail outlets has declined and currently sits at a minimum level of self-sufficiency. A review of consumer goods and services available in Milborne Port highlighted many unmet needs. Every recent survey of local residents shows that they would like more local shops and greater variety. But this enthusiasm must be matched by a commitment to support local shops if they are to be viable commercial enterprises and not a social convenience.

Most shops remain at their historical location - the High Street – but as the A30 becomes busier, it becomes a less attractive environment for the shopper. Car parking is seen by some to be a problem, even though the East Street and Weighbridge car parks are available nearby. The draw of a new retailer on the tannery site, and the migration of the surgery, will tend to reduce footfall still further. In several surveys the Post Office and the Library are seen locally as important destination services that must not be lost from the High Street. [10] [13]

Local charity Commonalty own several shops and meet their social purpose by maintaining rents at a relatively low level to retain shops in the village

### ***Business Premises***

45% of businesses in the 2009 survey occupy “Small” business premises, of 1000 sq feet or less [1]. This is near the average for South Somerset, but less than several other smaller settlements named in a recent district council survey where similar settlements in South Somerset - Somerton, Martock and Castle Cary - all have established industrial estates that accommodate substantial businesses [2]. Sherborne, Stalbridge, Henstridge, and Templecombe all lie within 10 minutes by car from Milborne Port and have substantial business premises. Arguably they are better served by road systems for HGV access.

At 58%, a small majority of businesses in the face-to-face survey [1] had been in the same premises for at least the last 10 years. A further 10% had relocated from elsewhere in Milborne Port or nearby. The results were similar to those in the 2005 survey [6]. Nearly all (81% of respondents) were generally satisfied with their current accommodation [1]. In 2005, most were “quite satisfied” with the size of their premises and 63% of businesses had felt their business

could grow in their present premises [6]. Several small businesses, particularly in the Construction sector, reported that although they are satisfied with their current accommodation, they seek additional lockup storage accommodation - often a key feature of a rural centre that supports a good number of specialist trades [1]. In 2005, 17% of respondents had wanted to see light industrial units developed [6].

### ***The Local Workforce***

In the 2001 census, 83.5% of residents were economically active, 7.5% more than the national average. This amounted to 1278 people, of whom 2.2% were retired; the average national rate [5]. Relatively few are unemployed. In January 2009, for example, only 18 residents were claiming Job Seekers Allowance, payable to people under pensionable age who are available for, and actively seeking, work. This was around a third of the national average [4]. This suggests that the current downturn in the economy has so far affected the village less than other parts of the country.

Of those in employment in 2002, 12% were self-employed – half as much again as the England average. 10.5% - slightly more than the national average - work from home [4]. Yet data from the 2001 census [5] showed that a lot of people travelled from Milborne Port to work elsewhere. For example, only 12.5% of employed people living in the village travelled less than 2km from their home to work, compared with 26.7% for South Somerset. This implies that for many people the choice is either to work from home or to travel to nearby towns to work. Milborne Port trades and employees find that the roads running both east/west and north to Wincanton give easy access to a wide range of job opportunities elsewhere.

In the business survey [1], less than half the people working in Milborne Port businesses (including the self employed) lived in the town. Nearly all other employees lived elsewhere in Somerset and Dorset, with only a very few travelling to work from outside the two counties.

From the 2001 census information, it is estimated that only about 160 people from Milborne Port work in the parish [4] [5]. Extrapolating the information from the 2009 business survey suggests that there are over 500 jobs in Milborne Port [1]. There is not enough work in Milborne Port for those who live there – for every job in the village there are 3 economically active residents. This might suggest that many people who work Sherborne or Yeovil choose to live in nearby villages such as Milborne Port..

As far as skills are concerned, the census tells us that Milborne Port residents are relatively well qualified, with fewer than average people with no qualifications, and more than average people with higher qualifications [4]. A large part of the current working population is made up of professional and managerial workers who commute to surrounding towns. Research of a good sample of local employers suggests that the skills that they require cannot be matched by simply encouraging those within the town to find local employment [1]. Equally, employment opportunities within the town are restricted in depth and numbers and hence real opportunity, especially for the younger generation, lies in the several nearby towns and elsewhere. The fact is that the number of jobs in Milborne Port is three time less than the number of inhabitants of working age.

## ***Local Jobs for Local People***

Because the local plan does not designate employment areas in the town, and the scope for further development of existing industrial uses is limited, the situation is unlikely to improve. If there is a will to retain local jobs, regard should be had to the proportion of industrial and employment land to housing land. Windfall brown field industrial land, if it exists, should be maintained as employment sites. Otherwise, future generations will not have the opportunity to work within the village, which will impact not just on community life, but also on its carbon footprint.

There is some evidence to suggest that local people want to hear about jobs available on their doorstep [13]. Local advertising of vacancies might improve self-sufficiency

A short-term residential increase may cause an imbalance of employment opportunities and increase the pressure on the local infrastructure. Too much housing may result in an influx of retired people together with increased private transport, or overloading local infrastructures such as parking or medical facilities. The policies with the current South Somerset Local Plan support the need to preserve the current proportion of industrial and employment land where these remain viable. The short-term viability of an employment allocation must not blind us to the long-term needs of the future generations.

## ***Where the Milborne Pound goes***

The more that money received locally is spent locally, the better it is for the local economy. The 2009 business survey attempted to quantify it by measuring the “local multiplier” (LM3) and see if, and how, it might be increased.

The developers of the LM3, the New Economic Foundation, said, “The issue is not necessarily that too little money flows into a neighbourhood. Rather, it is what consumers, public services and businesses do with that money. Too often it is spent on services with no local presence, and so immediately leaves the area.” [8]

Calculations based on confidential financial information provided by local businesses and residents estimated how many times money is re-spent locally before it finally leaks away. If a business has a LM3 of 1, then it is re-spending none of its income in the local area. None of its employees live in the parish, and it buys no goods or services here. The higher the multiplier is above 1, the better the business is for the local economy, because more money is being re-spent locally. The average LM3 for the 29 Milborne Port businesses providing information was calculated at 1.46, with a slightly higher figure for spending across Somerset and Dorset.[1]

This represents an opportunity to seek ways in which the LM3 can be driven up by local initiatives that may range from a local produce stall, to a review of preferred suppliers for goods and services

Residents and businesses say that the main barrier to local purchasing was simply that the goods and services they need are not available in Milborne Port. As with employment, people look to Sherborne, Yeovil, and other towns locally for their needs. [9] [10]

### 3 Milborne Port Economic Data and Analysis

#### Introduction

This detailed report was commissioned by the Milborne Port Community Planning Group to provide material for the Economy element of the Parish Plan (the Overview). It reviews of the needs and demands of Milborne Port businesses and will strengthen knowledge of how the local economy works, and define the travel and skills issues for the local working population.

The report also draws heavily on earlier consultation exercises, and engaged the business community in the town and its residents. Face to face interviews [1] gained useful qualitative data from local businesses. Statistical data was another key source of information.

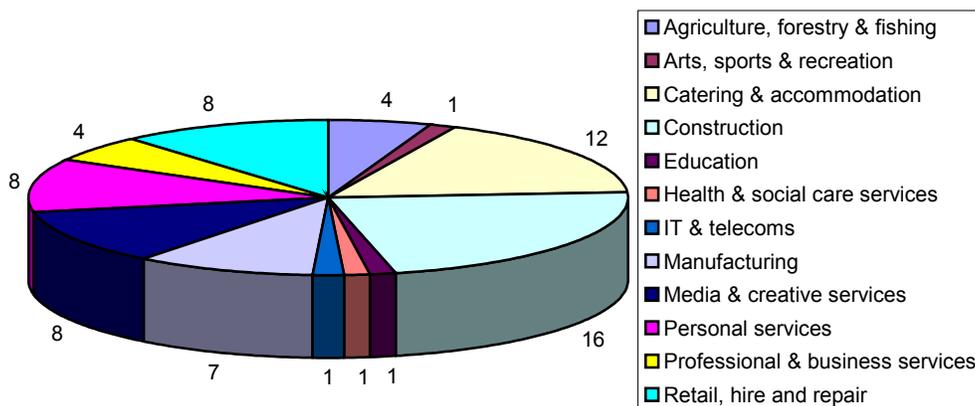
#### Milborne Port Businesses

##### Nature of Business

In early 2009, there were about 80 known businesses in Milborne Port, ranging from small home working endeavours, to a large laundry employing more than 100 people.

The pie chart below shows their distribution by sector. It shows that the economy of the town has a broad base, and there is no overdependence on a few sectors.

**Known Milborne Port Businesses, by sector**



The distribution of the business sectors by enterprise is compared, where possible, with the distributions in South Somerset, Somerset and the UK in the following table.

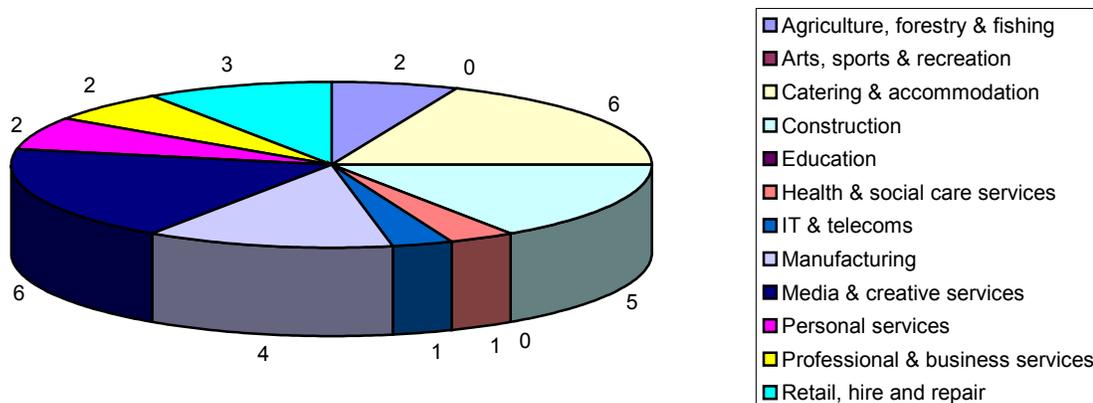
| Sector                           | % Share | Compare South Somerset | Compare Somerset | Compare UK |
|----------------------------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Agriculture, forestry & fishing  | 5.6     | 4                      | 4.2              | 1.6        |
| Arts, sports & recreation        | 1.4     |                        |                  |            |
| Catering & accommodation         | 16.9    | 8.5                    |                  |            |
| Construction                     | 22.5    | 7.4                    | 8.1              | 8.4        |
| Education                        | 1.4     | 5.8                    |                  |            |
| Health & social care services    | 1.4     | 8.6                    |                  |            |
| IT & telecoms                    | 1.4     |                        |                  |            |
| Manufacturing                    | 9.9     | 23                     | 15.3             | 9.8        |
| Media & creative services        | 11.3    |                        |                  |            |
| Personal services                | 11.3    |                        |                  |            |
| Professional & business services | 5.6     | 13.2                   | 16               | 21         |
| Retail, hire and repair          | 11.3    | 10.8                   |                  |            |

This does not, however reflect the numbers employed in each sector.

Direct comparisons, where they exist, are made with other areas, and date from 2008 [2] and 2005 [3]. They indicate that many economy sectors are broadly proportionate to the rest of South Somerset. Although the “Construction” sector appears to be over represented, the local businesses tend to be small in scale. Most of them are smaller, one man, enterprises that work together in an effective informal network. Similarly, “Catering and accommodation” services seem proportionately large in number, but include several seasonal bed and breakfast establishments. The few “Professional and business services” probably reflects the fact that demand for such services tends to be focused in larger centres.

Managers of 34 of them were interviewed face to face [1]. Information was sought on their business needs and impact on the local economy. They came from the following sectors

Milborne Port Businesses Interviewed



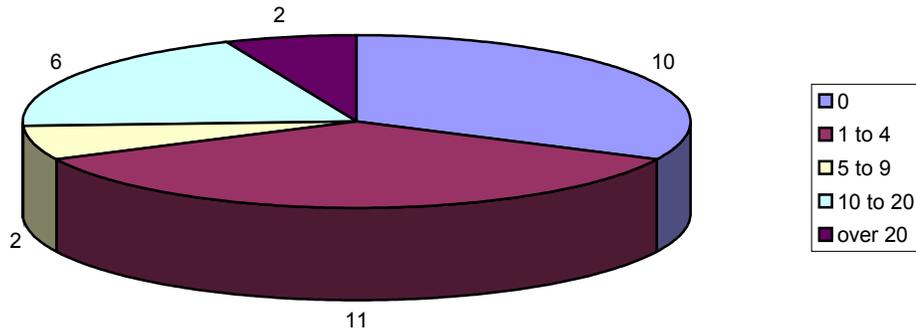
The largest groups interviewed were in the “Catering and Accommodation” and the “Media and Creative” sectors. The sample closely mirrors the distribution of services in the parish, but not the size. Larger businesses tended to be selected for survey as they were perceived to be more influential on the economy of the town.

**Size of Business**

Two out of three interviewees employed less than 5 people. 26% employ between 5 and 20 people, and only two businesses (the largest in the parish) employed more than 25. [1]

From the 2001 census information, it is estimated that only about 160 people from Milborne Port work in the parish [4] [5]. Extrapolating the information from the 2009 business survey suggests that there are over 500 jobs in Milborne Port [1]

**Size of business by Employees**



Nearly all the 235 employees in the surveyed businesses were full time – only 17 (7.2%) were part time, although this is probably an underestimation. There are casual and seasonal employment demands, and in the last census (2001), of the 1278 economically active people in Milborne Port, 28.4% worked part time [4]

## Milborne Port Workforce

### Size of workforce

The last census (in 2001) found that 83.5% of residents aged 16 to 74 were economically active – 7.5% more than the GB average. This amounted to 1278 people – with many others depending on them. 2.2% were retired – the same as the GB average. A further 14.4% were economically inactive [4]

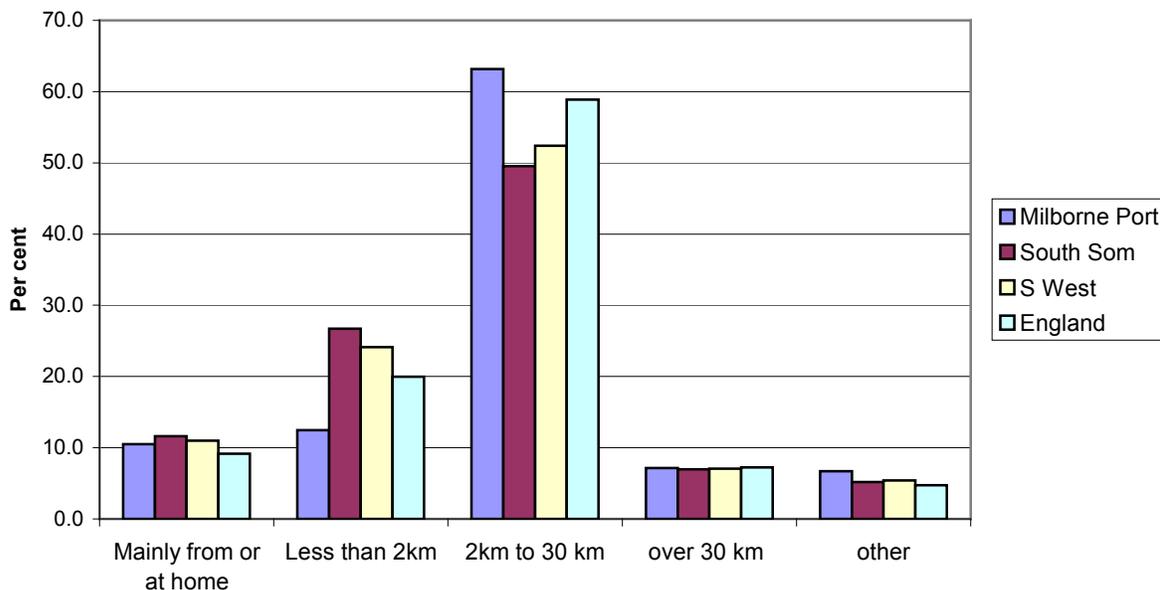
Relatively few are unemployed. The last available data (January 2009) shows that only 18 residents were claiming Job Seekers Allowance, payable to people under pensionable age who are available for, and actively seeking, work. This was around a third of the GB average [4] Of those in employment in 2002, 12% were self-employed – half as much again as the England average. 10.5% - slightly more than the national average - work from home [4]

### How far do people travel to work?

The travel to work data from the last (2001) census [5], displayed on the graph below, suggests that a lot of people travel from Milborne Port to work elsewhere. For example, only 12.5% of employed people travelled less than 2km from their home in Milborne Port to work, compared with 26.7% for South Somerset, or 24.1% for the South West. Yet the proportion of people working at or from home is similar to other areas.

In the business survey [1], over half the people working in Milborne Port businesses lived in the town, although this includes the self-employed. Driving up this proportion would improve the LM3 and the village’s sustainability. 42% live elsewhere in Somerset and Dorset. Very few travelled to work from outside the two counties.

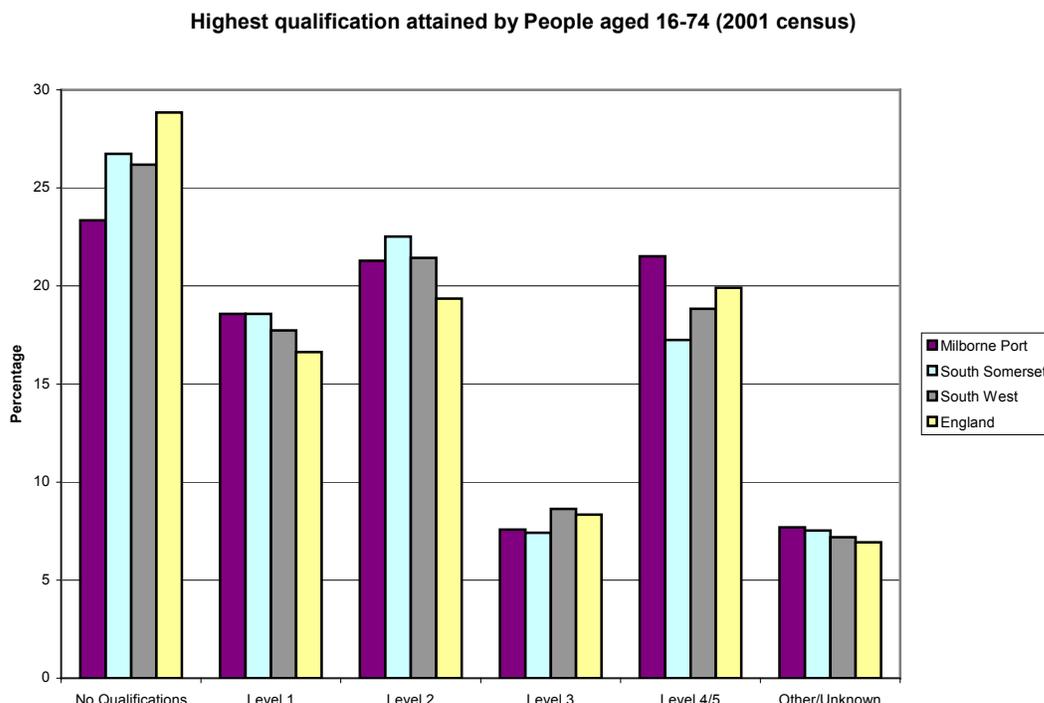
**Distances Travelled To Work (ONS, 2001)**



## Skills and knowledge

4.8% of residents aged between 16 and 74 described themselves as a “Student” in the census [4]. Although this was less than the England figure (7.25%), it was similar to the local, South Somerset, average (4.4%).

The graph below was derived from the census information. It shows that Milborne Port residents are relatively well qualified, with fewer than average people with no qualifications, and more than average people with higher qualifications [4]



In the local business survey, Milborne Port businesses felt that, on the whole, they do not have difficulties recruiting local people with the required skills [1]. There were some business that were so specialised that they had to either recruit at a national level, or work with others as associates as required on a project by project basis.

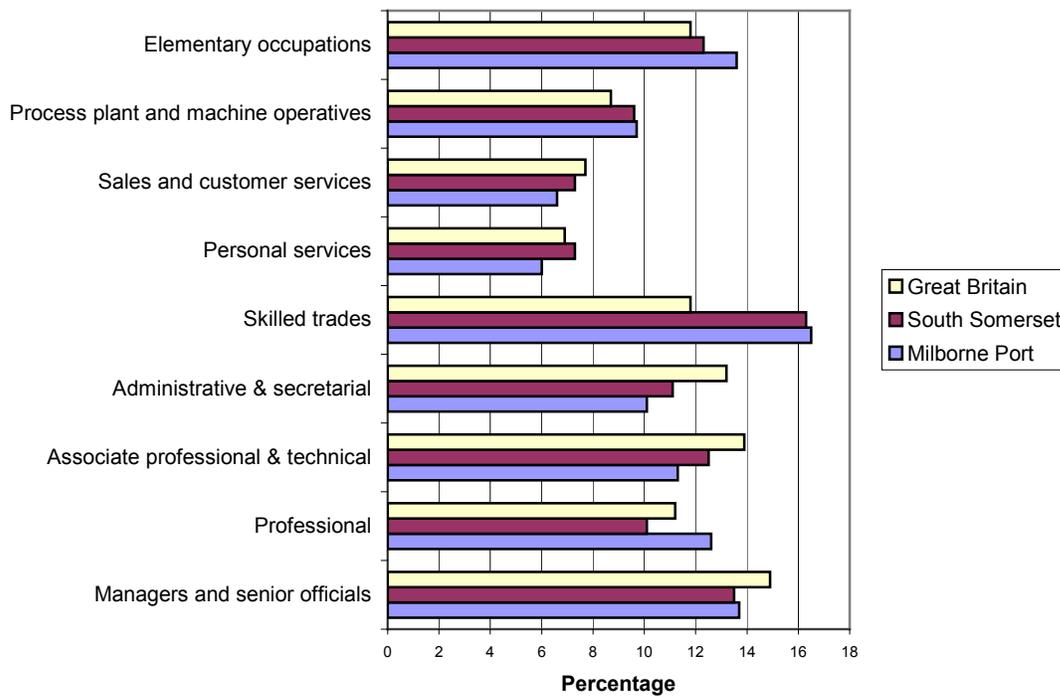
Taken together with the travel to work information, this might suggest either there is not enough of the right kind of work in Milborne Port for those who live there. But the reality is that there are many more economically active residents than there are jobs in the village, and those who work Sherborne or Yeovil choose to live in nearby villages such as Milborne Port..

## Occupation of Residents

Despite the better than average educational achievement, the Labour Market Profile, albeit based on the 2001 census, shows that a disproportionately high number of people in Milborne Port work in elementary or process plant operatives jobs.[4]

On the other hand, skilled trades and professional occupations are over represented too - perhaps because such workers tend to travel further to work

**Employment by Occupation**



There are relatively few requirements for sales and secretarial posts locally, which might explain why the village residents are under represented in those occupations.

## Business Premises

### What premises do local businesses use?

45% of businesses in the 2009 survey occupy “Small” business premises, of 1000 sq feet or less [1]. This is near the average for South Somerset, but less than several other smaller settlements in the district council’s 2007 review of workspace [2]. This is probably because Somerton, Martock and Castle Cary all have established industrial estates that accommodate substantial businesses.

The report’s *Table 10c: Size of Accommodation : “Smaller Settlements” and “Rural Areas”* [2] is reproduced below, together with the 2009 survey’s findings in the last row [1].

| Location        | Sample size | “Small”        | “Medium”            | “Large”        |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|
|                 |             | < 1000 sq ft % | 1000 - 5000 sq ft % | > 5000 sq ft % |
| Bruton          | 18          | 53             | 18                  | 29             |
| Castle Cary     | 21          | 76             | 10                  | 14             |
| Langport        | 32          | 52             | 32                  | 16             |
| Martock         | 35          | 50             | 26                  | 24             |
| “Rural Areas”   | 89          | 44             | 31                  | 24             |
| <i>Somerton</i> | 46          | 38             | 48                  | 15             |
| South Petherton | 19          | 63             | 37                  | 0              |
| Templecombe     | 6           | 17             | 33                  | 50             |
| <b>All</b>      | <b>273</b>  | <b>53</b>      | <b>28</b>           | <b>19</b>      |
| Milborne Port   | 31          | 45             | 29                  | 26             |

### Suitable Business Premises

A sense of business’s satisfaction with their current premises was gained in the 2009 survey [1]

#### Some Businesses in the survey were satisfied;

- *I have the space I need*
- *This place is fine for what I do. I can’t expand, but I don’t want to.*
- *For me, this is a good spot for business. I have a good local trade*
- *There is space upstairs I might expand into*

#### Some were suffering difficulties with their location

- *I had a battle with the planners to expand a little on this site*
- *Being away from the centres [of business activity] can be a problem*
- *Parking is a constraint*

- *The planning rules constrained our expansion*
- *Parking is terrible*
- *I'd like to move [within Milborne Port] but I cant find the space*

**Others are less rooted in Milborne Port;**

- *The building was available, so I brought my business here [from Sherborne]. I could have gone anywhere.*
- *The premises are almost too big – we could move anywhere*
- *I could be based anywhere – I just happen to live here. My sales are mostly online.*
- *I feel very fortunate to find this building – there's nowhere else to go in town. We would have had to move away if it weren't for this place*
- *We could be based anywhere – we sell and buy online*

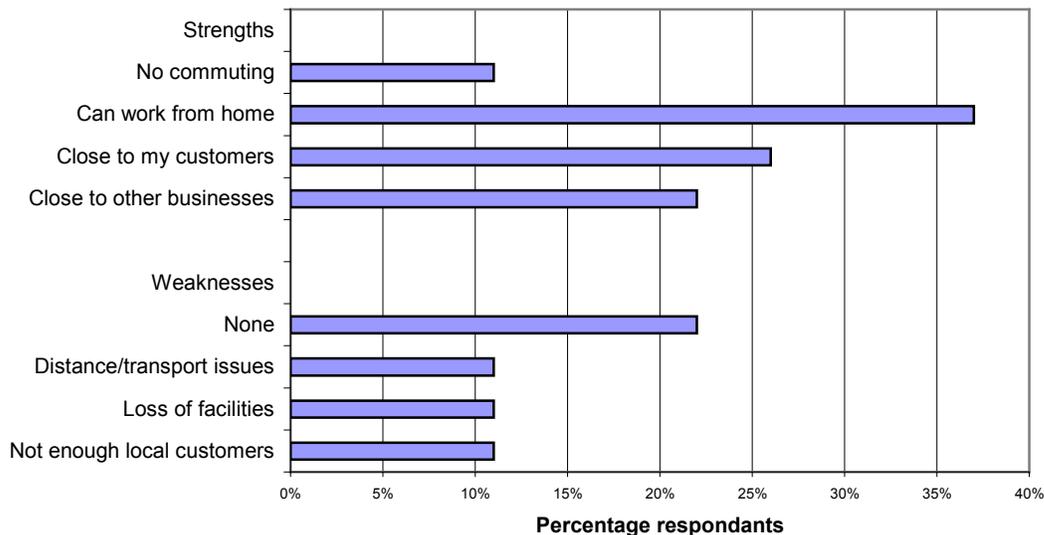
**A few felt vulnerable;**

- *Its only the low rent that keeps us viable*
- *There is very little choice in business premises – if the landlord gives up, I don't know where we could go*
- *There is simply not enough business space in the town*

At 58%, a small majority of businesses in the face-to-face survey [1] had been in the same premises for at least the last 10 years. 10% had relocated from elsewhere in Milborne Port or nearby. The results were similar to those in the 2005 survey [6]

19 businesses responded to the 2005 business survey questionnaire [6] by commenting on the strengths and weaknesses of running their business in Milborne Port as follows:

**Strengths and Weaknesses of Milborne Port Location (2005)**



The Business Centre in Clark House, Higher Kingsbury, contains a number of business units. Several of these units had been available to let for some months prior to the Business survey in early 2009 [1].

In terms of premises' suitability, some 81% of respondents reported in 2009 that they are generally satisfied with their current accommodation [1]. Of the remaining 19% who may become dissatisfied, one will be moving to larger Milborne Port premises within the year. This was similar to the 2005 survey [6] when most were "quite satisfied" with the size of their premises and 63% of businesses had felt their business could grow in their present premises. Several small businesses, particularly in the Construction sector, reported that although they are satisfied with their current accommodation, they seek additional lockup storage accommodation [1]. In 2005, 17% of respondents had wanted to see light industrial units developed [6].

Views on the desirability of a business park [1] were mixed;

**Some Businesses in the survey were keen on the idea;**

- *I'd like to see an industrial estate on the outskirts*
- *It would be nice to see a business park with small workshops*
- *I could do with a building on an industrial estate opposite the garage – we would have to move to achieve our potential*
- *I'd support a commercial centre by the garage with 10-15 starter units*
- *Some small business units in the town would be good*
- *I'd like to see small industrial units on the edge of the village, generating more employment and supplies for all of us*
- *We should identify an area of the village for light workshops*

**Others much less so;**

- *I see no need for an industrial estate*
- *We don't want a big commercial estate here*
- *I don't want to see business premises on the edge of town. They should have turned the tannery into business units*
- *We need slow, organic development – not an estate*
- *Don't build industrial units on the edge of town – just keep the workshops you have*

**Some other solutions were suggested...**

- *I could do with some secure lockup storage space in the town, as long as it's cheap.*
- *We should have the mix of residential and business uses we were used to.*
- *The Tannery site should have been retained for business uses – or shopping. Every road in the village leads to it*

In 2005, 61% of business survey respondents had said that the development of more shops or a café is a priority [6].

### **South Somerset Employment Land Requirements**

Questionnaires for the workspace demand study of South Somerset businesses were completed in autumn 2007 to provide a snapshot of the perceived need for new employment land at the time. Small businesses comprising less than 10 people accounted for 67% respondents [2].

At that time, 52% of respondents anticipated no growth in the size of their business over the next 5 years. But 35% anticipated expansion, and felt that their workforce would grow by 9% over the next two years and 18% within five years. This growth would require a minimum of 7.5 – 10 hectares of employment land in South Somerset, with the majority of demand around Yeovil and Ilminster. [2]

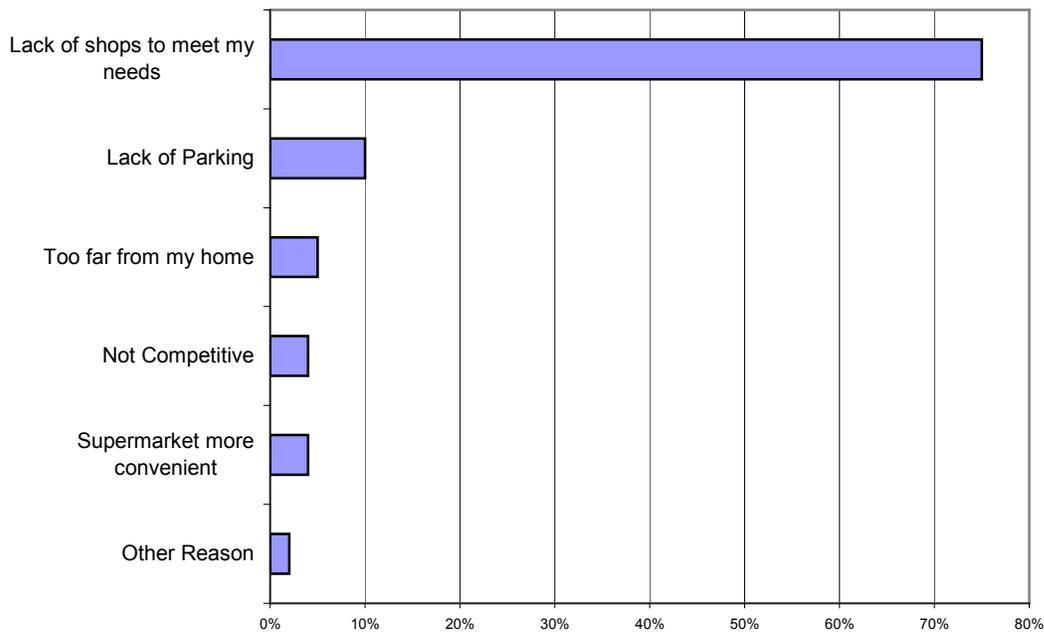
In South Somerset's Area East, the additional employment land requirement was calculated at between 0.65 and 0.87ha in Wincanton. No mention was made of a need in Milborne Port. Allowing for timeframes for acquisition, design, planning and construction, this translates into an immediate demand for land. This was not considered to be a reflection of the needs of the entire business community, but was seen as the minimum requirement for additional land or premises over the next 2 to 5 years.

## ***Shops and Shopping***

### **Perceptions of the Retail sector**

A Shopping and Services questionnaire attracted 400 responses from householders in Milborne Port in 2005 [9]. A majority (59%) did their main shopping in the supermarkets of Sherborne and Yeovil, and only 16% claimed to do it in Milborne Port. 14% said they do not shop in the town at all. The reasons they gave are shown in the chart below:

**Reasons I dont shop in Milborne Port (2005)**



The outstanding reason was the lack of a range of shops. The types of shop seen as most needed by residents in 2005 [9] were;

- Convenience store or small supermarket
- Greengrocers
- Bakers
- Fishmongers
- DIY or Hardware shop
- Bank
- Delicatessen
- Haberdashery

In 2008 the Steering Committee circulated a questionnaire in the village inviting people to raise their concerns [7]. The following shopping and commercial issues were raised, at the frequency shown;

- Keep the Post Office 44
- Need more/choice 36

- Keep/enlarge the library 19
- Keep current shops 6
- General store needs improving 4
- Keep all services 3
- Shops enhance the village spirit 1
- People commented that the town needed the following shop types
- Supermarket 8 (No supermarket 1)
- Greengrocer 4
- Bakers 3
- Grocer 3
- Café 2
- Farm shop 1
- Banks 1

The 2009 Focus Group [13] felt that shops and shopping could be improved by;

- Improve opening hours. Shops should stay open in the lunch hour when employees may wish to shop
- Another (non pub) place to eat would be good
- More local shops would to reduce travel
- There is no good restaurant in Milborne

The suite of surveys of resident's groups done in February/March 2009 tended to confirm these findings [10]

## **A Business View**

In 2009, businesses had fairly strong feelings about the retail sector in the town [1].

### **Most people said there were not enough shops;**

- *The town needs to be more self-sufficient*
- *The town needs more shops. And more jobs.*
- *I'd like Milborne to be a thriving market town where you could get all your staples – like Castle Cary. And NO Tescos*
- *Decent shops are needed to attract better staff to the town*
- *I want to buy more locally – but cant*
- *People without transport need local shops*
- *There are too few shops for the amount of houses*

### **Specific shops were needed by some;**

- *A bank would be useful. So would a decent stationers*
- *I want to see more shops here. And a bank – or building society.*
- *A fruit and veg shop would bring more life to the village*
- *There has been a steady decline in the number of shops in the village since we came here 20 years ago. A hardware shop would be very useful*
- *I'd use the shops more, but they don't have what I want. The butcher is*

*great, but a deli or specialist food shop would be good too. So would a greengrocer, baker and hardware shop*

- *No one sells fish or veg, and the Co-op is too small*
- *I want to buy locally, but there's really nothing in Milborne Port that my business can use*

**The Post Office is important to nearly all businesses;**

- *It would be a disaster if the Post Office closed*
- *The thing that would ruin the village would be the loss of the Post Office*
- *The Post Office must stay – in one form or another*

**Problems were identified;**

- *Once the Surgery moves, trade in the High Street will be much reduced*
- *Parking is an issue, and getting worse*
- *The village has outgrown its centre*

**Some solutions were suggested;**

- *When shops close they shouldn't be allowed to be tuned into houses*
- *Stalbridge is thriving because it kept its bank.*
- *Our business would welcome village growth. More people = more work*
- *Keep cottage industries here – and affordable homes*
- *East Street Car Park is good – but it could be better signed and lit*
- *Our shops would benefit from better signage*

Despite their stated wish to do so, most businesses in the survey felt that their opportunities to buy locally were hampered by the limited availability of supplies [1]

### **What's available? The CPI Shopping Test**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is based on a 'shopping basket' containing those goods and services on which people typically spend their money. The growth in the CPI is referred to as inflation and is usually measured on an annual basis. But in this case, the shopping basket was used to look at the availability of commonly purchased goods and services in Milborne Port. Each group entry was "weighted" in proportion to the it's share of the CPI shopping basket bill.

In February 2009, the availability of goods and services listed in the Index was estimated, based on visits to Milborne Port businesses [11]. The estimate in the table below also offers some indication of unmet consumer need in the parish.

| <b>CPI Goods and Services</b> | <b>Yes</b> | <b>Partly</b> | <b>No</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| <b>01.1 Food</b>              |            |               |           |
| 01.1.1 Bread and cereals      |            | 10.9          |           |
| 01.1.2 Meat                   | 10.9       |               |           |

|  |      |      |      |
|--|------|------|------|
| 01.1.3 Fish  |      | 10.9 |      |
| 01.1.4 Milk, cheese and eggs                                 | 10.9 |      |      |
| 01.1.5 Oils and fats   | 10.9 |      |      |
| 01.1.6 Fruit   |      | 10.9 |      |
| 01.1.7 Vegetables  |      | 10.9 |      |
| 01.1.8 Sugar, jam, syrups, chocolates and confectionery      | 10.9 |      |      |
| 01.1.9 Food products (not elsewhere classified)              |      | 10.9 |      |
| <b>01.2 Non-alcoholic beverages</b>                          |      |      |      |
| 01.2.1 Coffee, tea and cocoa                                 | 10.9 |      |      |
| 01.2.2 Mineral water, soft drinks and juices                 |      | 10.9 |      |
| <b>02.1 Alcoholic beverages (off sales)</b>                  |      |      |      |
| 02.1.1 Spirits   | 4.2  |      |      |
| 02.1.2 Wine  |      | 4.2  |      |
| 02.1.3 Beer  | 4.2  |      |      |
| <b>02.2 Tobacco</b>  |      |      |      |
| 02.2.1 Tobacco   | 4.2  |      |      |
| <b>03.1 Clothing</b>   |      |      |      |
| 03.1.2 Garments  |      |      | 6.3  |
| 03.1.3 Other clothing and clothing accessories               |      |      | 6.3  |
| 03.1.4 Cleaning, repair and hire of clothing                 |      | 6.3  |      |
| <b>03.2 Footwear including repairs</b>                       |      |      |      |
| 03.2.1 Footwear  |      |      | 6.3  |
| <b>04.1 Rent</b>   |      |      |      |
| 04.1.1 Housing for rent                                      | 11.5 |      |      |
| <b>04.3 Regular maintenance and repair of the dwelling</b>   |      |      |      |
| 04.3.1 Materials for maintenance and repair                  |      |      | 11.5 |
| 04.3.2 Services for maintenance and repair                   | 11.5 |      |      |
| <b>04.4 Water supply and misc. services for the dwelling</b> |      |      |      |
| 04.4.1 Water supply  | 11.5 |      |      |
| 04.4.3 Sewerage collection                                   | 11.5 |      |      |
| <b>04.5 Electricity, gas and other fuels</b>                 |      |      |      |
| 04.5.1 Electricity   | 11.5 |      |      |
| 04.5.2 Gas   | 11.5 |      |      |
| 04.5.3 Liquid fuels  |      |      | 11.5 |
| 04.5.4 Solid fuels   | 11.5 |      |      |
| <b>05.1 Furniture, furnishings and carpets</b>               |      |      |      |
| 05.1.1 Furniture and furnishings                             |      |      | 6.7  |
| 05.1.2 Carpets and other floor coverings                     |      |      | 6.7  |
| <b>05.2 Household textiles</b>                               |      |      |      |
| 05.2.1 Household textiles                                    |      |      | 6.7  |
| <b>05.3 Household appliances</b>                             |      |      |      |
| 05.3.1/2 Major appliances and small electric goods           | 6.7  |      |      |
| 05.3.3 Repair of household appliances                        | 6.7  |      |      |
| <b>05.4 Glassware, tableware and household utensils</b>      |      |      |      |
| 05.4.1 Glassware, tableware and household utensils           |      |      | 6.7  |
| <b>05.5 Tools and equipment for house and garden</b>         |      |      |      |
| 05.5.1 Tools and equipment for house and garden              |      | 6.7  |      |
| <b>05.6 Goods and services for Household maintenance</b>     |      |      |      |
| 05.6.1 Non-durable household goods                           | 6.7  |      |      |

|   |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|
| 05.6.2 Domestic services and household services               | 6.7  |      |      |
| <b>06.1 Medical products, appliances and equipment</b>        |      |      |      |
| 06.1.1 Pharmaceutical products                                | 2.2  |      |      |
| 06.1.2/3 Other medical and therapeutic equipment              |      | 2.2  |      |
| <b>06.2 Out-Patient Services</b>                              |      |      |      |
| 06.2.1/3 Medical Services and Paramedical Services            |      | 2.2  |      |
| 06.2.2 Dental Services  |      |      | 2.2  |
| <b>06.3 Hospital Services</b>                                 |      |      |      |
| 06.3.1 Hospital Services                                      |      |      | 2.2  |
| <b>07.1 Purchase of Vehicle</b>                               |      |      |      |
| 07.1.1a New Cars  |      |      | 15.2 |
| 07.1.1b Secondhand Cars                                       | 15.2 |      |      |
| 07.1.2/3 New Motorcycles and bicycles                         |      |      | 15.2 |
| <b>07.2 Operation of Personal Transport Equipment</b>         |      |      |      |
| 07.2.1 Spare Parts and Accessories                            |      | 15.2 |      |
| 07.2.2 Fuels and Lubricants                                   | 15.2 |      |      |
| 07.2.3 Vehicle Maintenance and repair                         |      | 15.2 |      |
| 07.2.4 Other Services   |      | 15.2 |      |
| <b>07.3 Transport services</b>                                |      |      |      |
| 07.3.1 Passenger transport by railway                         |      |      | 15.2 |
| 07.3.2 Passenger transport by road                            | 15.2 |      |      |
| 07.3.3 Passenger transport by air                             |      |      | 15.2 |
| 07.3.4 Passenger transport by sea and inland waterway         |      |      | 15.2 |
| <b>08.1 Postal services</b>                                   |      |      |      |
| 08.1.1 Postal services  | 2.3  |      |      |
| <b>08.2/3 Telephone and telefax equipment and services</b>    |      |      |      |
| 08.2.1 Telephone equipment and services                       |      | 2.3  |      |
| <b>09.1 Audio-visual equipment and related products</b>       |      |      |      |
| 09.1.1 Reception and reproduction of sound and pictures       |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.1.2 Photographic, cinematographic and optical equipment    |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.1.3 Data processing equipment                              |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.1.4 Recording media  |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.1.5 Repair of audio-visual equipment & related products    | 15.2 |      |      |
| <b>09.2 Other major durables for recreation &amp; culture</b> |      |      |      |
| 09.2.1/2 Major durables for in/outdoor recreation             |      |      | 15.2 |
| <b>09.3 Other recreational items, gardens and pets</b>        |      |      |      |
| 09.3.1 Games, toys and hobbies                                |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.3.2 Equipment for sport and open-air recreation            |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.3.3 Gardens, plants and flowers                            | 15.2 |      |      |
| 09.3.4/5 Pets, related products and services                  |      | 15.2 |      |
| <b>09.4 Recreational and cultural services</b>                |      |      |      |
| 09.4.1 Recreational and sporting services                     |      | 15.2 |      |
| 09.4.2 Cultural services                                      |      | 15.2 |      |
| <b>09.5 Books, newspapers and stationery</b>                  |      |      |      |
| 09.5.1 Books  |      |      | 15.2 |
| 09.5.2 Newspapers and periodicals                             | 15.2 |      |      |

|  |              |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 09.5.3 Misc. printed matter, stationery, drawing materials |              | 15.2         |              |
| <b>09.6 Package holidays</b>                               |              |              |              |
| 09.6.1 Package holidays                                    |              |              | 15.2         |
| <b>10.0 Education</b>                                      |              |              |              |
| 10.0.1 Private Education etc                               |              |              | 1.9          |
| <b>11.1 Catering services</b>                              |              |              |              |
| 11.1.1 Restaurants & cafes                                 |              | 13.7         |              |
| 11.1.2 Staff Canteens                                      |              |              | 13.7         |
| <b>11.2 Accommodation services</b>                         |              |              |              |
| 11.2.1 Accommodation services                              | 13.7         |              |              |
| <b>12.1 Personal care</b>                                  |              |              |              |
| 12.1.1 Hairdressing and personal grooming establishment    | 9.9          |              |              |
| 12.1.2/3 Appliances and products for personal care         |              | 9.9          |              |
| <b>12.3 Personal effects (not elsewhere classified)</b>    |              |              |              |
| 12.3.1 Jewellery, clocks and watches                       |              |              | 9.9          |
| 12.3.2 Other personal effects                              |              |              | 9.9          |
| <b>12.4 Social protection</b>                              |              |              |              |
| 12.4.1 Social protection                                   | 9.9          |              |              |
| <b>12.5 Insurance</b>                                      |              |              |              |
| 12.5.2 House contents insurance                            |              | 9.9          |              |
| 12.5.3 Health insurance                                    |              | 9.9          |              |
| 12.5.4 Transport insurance                                 |              | 9.9          |              |
| <b>12.6 Financial services (not elsewhere classified)</b>  |              |              |              |
| 12.6.2 Other financial services                            |              | 9.9          |              |
| <b>12.7 Other services (not elsewhere classified)</b>      |              |              |              |
| 12.7.1 Other services                                      |              | 9.9          |              |
| <b>TOTALS (number)</b>                                     | <b>296.9</b> | <b>266.3</b> | <b>321.3</b> |
| <b>(Per cent)</b>  | <b>33.6%</b> | <b>30.1%</b> | <b>36.3%</b> |

A third of the 85 defined groups of goods or services were available in the parish, even if it was provided from outside the parish as in the case of power supplies, for example. In addition, 30% of other CPI goods or services were “partly” available, and the remaining third could not be found in the town. DIY materials and some foods were perhaps the most missed items on the list. [11]

Definitions of the CPI goods and services were taken from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) description found in February 2009 at [www.statistics.gov.uk/elmr/04\\_08/downloads/elmr\\_apr08\\_gooding.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/elmr/04_08/downloads/elmr_apr08_gooding.pdf).

The availability of a good or service in the parish was usually self-evident, even if it was provided from outside the parish as in the case of gas supplies, for example. In some other cases, an opinion was formed on the availability, based on visits to Milborne Port businesses

## References

- [1] Face to face survey of Milborne Port Businesses. Tegwyn Jones. March 2009
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- [3] *Business Perspective on Property : A Survey of Local Businesses in South Somerset*. A South Somerset Business Needs survey. SSDC: November 2003
- [4] Census 2001 reported in Ward Labour Market Profile for Milborne Port. NOMIS. [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk)
- [5] Census 2001 Travel to Work reported in ONS Neighbourhood Statistics [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk)
- [6] A Business Questionnaire. Milborne Port Parish Council 2005
- [7] *Help Shape the Future of Milborne Port- a survey*. Parish Plan Steering Committee. Spring 2008
- [8] *Plugging the Leaks*. New Economics Foundation.2002
- [9] A Shopping and Services Questionnaire. South Somerset District Council 2005
- [10] Focus Groups of Milborne Port Clubs and Societies. Tegwyn Jones. March 2009
- [11] The Milborne Port CPI Test. Tegwyn Jones. February 2009
- [12] The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026. South West Regional Assembly. 2006
- [13] A Focus Group of Milborne Port residents. Tegwyn Jones. March 2009

## 4 Where the Money Goes

“It's not just where you spend your money that matters. It is also important where the people you give it to spend it.” To explore this principle, the New Economics Foundation (nef) developed a tool to measure the impact local purchasing has on a local economy. [8] Increasing local purchasing can significantly improve the economic vitality of a community. It also has other social and environmental benefits.

### The Local Multiplier

The [Local Multiplier 3](http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org) (LM3) tool is described by nef on their website [www.pluggingtheleaks.org](http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org). The method tracks where money spent locally goes. The purpose of tracking and measuring this spending is to identify opportunities to get more money circulating locally. “Communities,” nef asserts, “Can achieve more local circulation of money by strengthening linkages in their local economies.”

The LM3 measures how money is spent, re-spent and re-spent again at the local level. The bulk of spending takes place within the first three 'rounds' of spending, so the money is not tracked beyond this point. LM3 has been widely used since its development in 2001 as a measure of local impact of spending. Most of the uses have related to local authority spending, particularly on projects. The 2009 study was the first known occasion when it was applied to the economy of a community.

To explain how it works, here's an example.

For every £100 Joe's Corner Shop takes over the counter, £35 is swallowed up by taxes and business rates; electricity and water bills; interest on Joe's business loan; and rent to a distant landlord. £35 is spent on stock bought from a wholesaler 20 miles away. The remaining £30 is spent in the village because: £12 pays Mary who works in the shop and lives locally; £10 is spent on stock bought from a farmer in the village, and proprietor Joe (who also lives in the village) makes £8.

Of that £30 that stayed in the village, Mary spends £1.50 on a magazine from the newsagent Joe buys a beer for £2.50 at the pub, and the farmer puts £3 (of his £10) into the wages of his farm worker. The farmer also had a £2 shandy with Joe at the pub. So a further £9 goes around the village.

So in this example, the money spent in the village is (the original) £100 + £30 (the “second round”) + £9 (the “third round”). This means that Joe's Corner Shop achieves a LM3 multiplier of 1.39 (139 divided by 100)

### Measuring LM3 in Milborne Port

The 2005 survey found that 53% of local business estimated that their customers came from “within 10 miles” [6]. The amount of local purchasing was examined in more detail in 2009 to see if, and how, it might be increased.

As part of the 2009 Survey of Businesses, many local businesses provided financial information in confidence to enable a prediction of their local spend by calculating their LM3. In some cases, estimates had to be made to complete the calculation. To do this, the consultant;

- Obtained a business's turnover (the “First Round”).
- Looked at how that business spends its income in Milborne Port - principally on supplies, staff, subcontractors, and overheads (the “Second Round”).
- Then looked at how the local people and local businesses who received money from that organisation - the suppliers, staff, etc. - spend their money (the “Third Round”).
- Calculated the LM3, to indicate how much impact the business has on the local economy, by expressing the total spend in Milborne Port as a proportion of the original turnover.

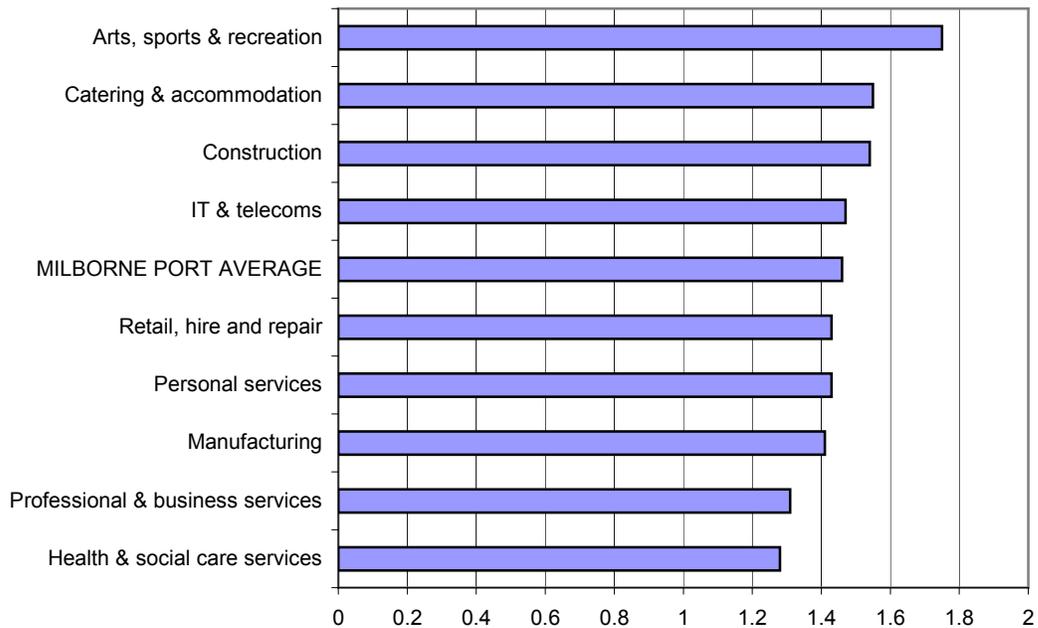
A similar calculation was done for the local spend in Somerset and Dorset. An appreciation was gained on where money leaks from Milborne Port, and how it can be reduced. Or put another way, if and how local purchasing can be increased to the benefit of the local economy.

If a business has a multiplier of only 1, then it is re-spending none of its income in the local area. In theory, the maximum possible multiplier is 3. So the higher the multiplier is above 1, the more the business benefits the local economy, because more money is being re-spent locally.

### The Outcome

Of the 29 businesses that provided some or all of the financial information the calculation required, 6 had hardly any (LM3 of 1.0 to 1.2) additional impact in Milborne Port. The best performer achieved 2.13, and the average was 1.46. It varied across the sectors as graph shows. (There were too few responses from the Agriculture, Education & Media sectors to include)

**Average LM3 for Milborne Port Business Sectors**



In the calculation, spend by local people (as proprietors, or employees) was a significant feature. Based on the results of earlier surveys, and on discussions with local people in groups and societies, it is likely that the average Milborne Port resident does not spend more than 10% of household income locally, despite their willingness. This had quite a significant impact on the LM3.

A lot of local money leaks out to Sherborne and Yeovil.

## Barriers to Local Purchasing

In their “Plugging the Leaks” report, the New Economic Foundation said, “The issue is not necessarily that too little money flows into a neighbourhood. Rather, it is what consumers, public services and businesses do with that money. Too often it is spent on services with no local presence, and so immediately leaves the area.” [8] With this principle in mind, a discussion of how local spending might be increased was part of the 2009 Business survey [1].

A leaflet was distributed to the local businesses interviewed, intending to encourage local spending. But the value of local spending was well known to them. The problem was rather that the supplies (or sometimes, the specialist staff) they need are simply not available in Milborne Port.

The main barriers to local purchasing were described [1] by businesses as;

- Specialist supplies are not available in Milborne Port
  - General supplies (such as printer paper, paint, or other building supplies) are not available in Milborne Port
  - General supplies were cheaper elsewhere
  - It was more convenient to purchase general supplies elsewhere
  - Specialist employee skills are not available in Milborne Port
  - I retained professional services from near my earlier business address after I moved here
- *“I want to buy locally, but there’s really nothing in Milborne Port that my business can use”*

Local businesses certainly understand the value of local purchasing to the economy of the town. But it appears that, no matter how keen they are to spend locally, their ability to do so is hampered by the availability of necessary goods and services. This, in turn, represents a business opportunity.

## Scope for greater local economic linkages

If local purchasing is to be a route towards greater sustainability of the town, with beneficial effects on the economy and environment, it is important that local businesses can strengthen economic linkages with others in the town. There was plenty of enthusiasm for the idea. Apart from the Construction sector, the main constraint was the availability of complementary businesses within the town.[1]

### Businesses said;

- *I would like to use local businesses more, but I have no real opportunities for that*
- *There is very little I can source in Milborne for the business – apart*

*from local builders*

- *I do buy locally... local people should do the same*
- *It would be good to see a business anchored to the new surgery - something like a nursing services agency.*
- *It would be good to have a solicitor, and more accountants, in town*

Where no local suppliers could be identified to meet the needs of businesses, goods or services were sourced elsewhere – this might represent a business opportunity

Anecdotally, local residents gave the same reason for not buying more in Milborne Port. Unless a wider variety of goods can be bought in the village, or more local people are employed locally, the LM3 is unlikely to increase.

## **Employing Local People**

For many businesses, one of the largest impacts on the multiplier was whether or not employees lived in the town. So in the 2009 business survey, employers were tested on whether they can recruit locally. The opportunity to do this varied widely. Of the 34 businesses surveyed, 9 depend on fairly, or very, specialist skills unlikely to be found in the village. They tended to be the smaller firms. Larger employers and the retailers felt more able to recruit locally. [1]

### **There were no employee skill problems for some;**

- *I found good staff here. They had the right attitude. If they did not have the skills, we could train them.*
- *I am glad to give work to local people – the skills I need are here*
- *We try to take on local people – and usually achieve it.*
- *I like being able to walk to my work*

### **While others foresaw barriers;**

- *Some people [in Milborne] may have the skills I need, but it is unlikely they will have the necessary experience*
- *It would be easier to recruit the right people if I was somewhere busy like Bournemouth – my sort of employees prefer city life*
- *My sort of employee moves away. I would like to see local families stay in Milborne, where possible. What Commonalty does towards this is brilliant*
- *The low level skills are here – but I work with associates for most of the time. They live all over the UK*
- *I subcontract to people a long way away – the specialist skills aren't in the village*
- *Not always easy to find staff I can trust*

It may also be possible to advertise jobs vacancies in the village in the parish magazine or local website, along with a calendar of local events. Local promotion of local services may also be achieved by these means.

## 5 The Consultation Process

This chapter details some of the data that has been collected over the last few years through the many and varied consultation processes. It aims to highlight how residents and businesses have been able to express their views on the Milborne Port economy. A detailed analysis is offered in Part 3, the Economic Data and Analysis chapter

From the outset, the value of all recent consultation was recognised. Further consultation was carried on with the business sector, not only to hear their views, but also to gauge the extent of local purchasing, and how barriers to it can be overcome. Many communities have strengthened their economy by increasing local purchasing

### **A Consultation for the Village Design Statement**

In 2003 a Village Workshop at the school marked the start of the Parish Planning process. It gathered the views of people in the village on the importance of architectural, street scene, heritage and landscape features of Milborne Port. The outcomes from this consultation, together with the contributions of individual villagers underpinned the publication of the Village Design Statement

### **A Shopping and Services Questionnaire**

In 2005, a questionnaire was delivered to 1200 homes in Milborne Port. It had a “good” 33% response. The questions were about a number of clear, yet often interlinked, themes such as;

- Where respondents work
- Travel to work
- Where main shopping is done
- Barriers to shopping in Milborne
- Travel to shop in Milborne
- Needs from shops in Milborne
- What shops are needed
- Where new shops should go

### **A Business Questionnaire**

The 2005 shopping survey was followed by a questionnaire delivered to the 84 known businesses in Milborne Port. 19 (23%) responded. The questions were on business themes such as;

- Type of business
- How long in Milborne
- Strengths and weaknesses of location
- Where customers come from
- What business premises are needed
- Suitability of current premises
- Satisfaction with access
- What should change

### ***Help Shape the Future of Milborne Port - A Household Survey***

The Parish Plan Steering Committee circulated a questionnaire in Spring 2008 to all households in the village the focus on Key Issues that affect residents. It invited people to rate the importance of 12 key topic areas, and offered space for comments

### **Face to face survey of Milborne Port Businesses.**

On behalf of the Parish Plan Steering Committee, a Consultant conducted face to face interviews with 32 proprietors of local businesses in February/March 2009. The survey sought business views on many issues, including the barriers to growth, and the local spend of business, with a view to calculating the “multiplier”.

### **Consultations with Milborne Port Clubs and Societies.**

In March 2009 the consultant consulted some local groups and clubs to determine their views on the local economy and other matters. The clubs were;

- The British Legion
- The Church House Luncheon Club
- Springfield Toddlers Group
- Milborne Port WI

Similarly, discussions had been held with the Clerk to the Parish Council, and the Chairman of the influential local charity Commonalty

### **A Focus Group of Milborne Port Residents.**

In March 2009 the consultant facilitated a focus group of 42 randomly selected Milborne Port residents to determine their views on the local economy and other matters.

People reflected on the things they wanted to retain, and some aspirations for improvement. Views were broadly divided into Economic, Environmental and Social issues. There was discussion on communication.

## 6 Constraints and Statistical Data

In order that Milborne Port can be compared with other communities, data has been drawn from the Census and other statistical sources. This information was part of the foundation for the SWOT analysis (which can only be done in relation to other areas) and the Action Plan.

This report also benefits from other relevant studies that have been carried out over the last few years.

The Action Plan has regard to the planning and other constraints that apply locally.

### **ONS Neighbourhood Statistics**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) website [www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk) contains detailed statistics within specific geographic areas, for example in neighbourhood regeneration. Data from Milborne Port ward can be compared to South Somerset and Great Britain

### **Official Labour Market Statistics**

Nomis publishes the website [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk) on which can be found an overview of the labour market within a ward like Milborne Port. It can be compared to South Somerset and Great Britain.

### **Plugging the Leaks.**

Local spending can be an important contributor to the local economy. The New Economics Foundation published this guide on how to do it in 2002. Elizabeth Cox, an economist with the Foundation, visited Milborne Port and addressed the Parish Planning Group

### **Regional Spatial Strategy**

The South West Regional Assembly published a draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026 in 2006. It “paints the picture of a sustainable South West, setting out the trends, challenges and policy responses that the region will need to address, emphasising the commitment ... to securing sustainable economic progress.” The Draft RSS policies have been shaped to help enable this vision to be realised in spatial terms

### **South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy; 2008 – 2026**

South Somerset Together, a partnership of agencies that aims to bring about a sustainable improved quality of life for the communities of South Somerset, published the Community Strategy. The Strategy identifies how it will achieve its vision by identifying needs and opportunities, co-ordinating action, and influencing priorities.

## **South Somerset Local Plan (and Local Development Framework)**

This plan has guided planning decisions that affect Milborne Port. Although the Local Development Framework (LDF) will shortly supersede the South Somerset Local Plan, most of the Plan's policies will remain in place

## **Milborne Port Village Design Statement**

The 2003 Village Design Statement makes 23 comments about the way that local people would like the village to develop.

## **Business Perspective on Property: A Survey of Local Businesses in South Somerset**

South Somerset District Council published a survey of business premises needs in the district in November 2003. They published an updated survey in March 2008

## 7 Action Planning

### A SWOT Analysis

The Economic Data and Analysis revealed a lot of comparative information. If it is to inform the first draft action plan, it should be brought into clearer focus by a SWOT analysis. Determining the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the economy is a useful exercise that can identify the remedial or protective actions that need to be taken.

If we take the objective to be “A healthy and sustainable economy for Milborne Port and its residents”, then it follows that we need to identify the;

**Strengths:** attributes of Milborne Port that are helpful to achieving the objective.

**Weaknesses:** attributes of Milborne Port that are harmful to achieving the objective.

**Opportunities:** *external* conditions that are helpful to achieving the objective.

**Threats:** *external* conditions that could do damage to the business's performance.

Identification of SWOTs is a useful stage that provides focus in the process of planning to achieve the objective.

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| <p><b>Strengths</b> (to Use and Capitalise on)</p> <p>Growing Population<br/>                 High proportion of children in village<br/>                 Higher than national average level 4/5 qualifications<br/>                 Low % unemployment<br/>                 Basic Shops and services<br/>                 Willingness to purchase locally where possible<br/>                 Some sectors (i.e. construction) network well</p> | <p><b>Weaknesses</b> (to Improve)</p> <p>Only 1 in 8 of working population actually work in the parish<br/>                 Residents unaware of job and other opportunities in the parish<br/>                 Not all shop types available (need to go outside village for some shopping)<br/>                 No café/restaurant<br/>                 Little scope in High Street for more shops<br/>                 Parking seen as a localised problem</p> |
| <p><b>Opportunities</b> (to Exploit and Benefit from)</p> <p>Grant aid is available for certain parish improvements<br/>                 District and County Councils are supportive of community development<br/>                 Good broadband service<br/>                 Region is a tourist destination<br/>                 A30 provides good transport link</p>   | <p><b>Threats</b> (to Mitigate)</p> <p>Low proportion of population without private transport (high mobility to go elsewhere for shopping)<br/>                 Close to large centres of commerce and work<br/>                 Financially attractive to convert empty commercial properties to residential<br/>                 Young people drawn away from village</p>  |

## **Prioritising Process**

To ensure that at this the Parish Plan reflects the community's aspirations and the future plans of statutory bodies, the prioritising process should have three elements:

Community feedback and Prioritising Event

The analysis of the information gathered at that Event

The input from service providers of their plans for Milborne Port.

## **Feedback Event**

The draft Milborne Port Environmental, Social and Economic Plans should be drawn together and presented to the public at an event, to allow them to;

Review the themed issues and preliminary projects;

Make any additional comments on issues they feel are missing, in order to confirm that the plan accurately reflects what was of the most concern to the community.

To encourage participants to indicate the potential impact and priority of the issues and/or projects

The last aim will assist with the selection of projects to be incorporated into the final Plan. The criteria used could be:

Low impact, low priority, does not need to go ahead

Low impact, low priority, but would be good to undertake

High impact, high priority, should go ahead

## **Analysis of Community Priorities**

The Feedback Event outcomes could be compared with the scores and comments from earlier consultations to result in a clear priority for each issue and project. It will not be possible to please all of the people all of the time. There will probably be strong opinions both in favour of, and against, some issues. All arguments are valid, and any decision should take the fears of those who disagree into account.

The best defence to this is a robust prioritisation exercise. It should be transparent enough to see which issues are more important to most people and why actions are recommended accordingly, with a clear explanation for those who disagree.

## **Consultation with Service Providers**

The revised draft Parish Plan needs to be circulated to relevant statutory agencies and public service providers to ensure that the document takes account of their future plans. There would be a range of possible projects that could be taken forward by a number of organisations, individually or in partnership. The resulting document would be a robust Parish Plan that would reflect the needs of the people of Milborne Port for years to come.