

Bridport Town Council Health Check Report 2019

Summary of Retailers Survey

14 Independent retailers completed the survey between July /November 2019
12 of the 14 Retailers (85%) had been in business in Bridport for over 10 years At least 5 retailers had been operating in the town over 25 years
Employing staff Most responders employed more than 2 staff. 9 part time staff in total 12 full time staff in total
Trading in 2019 23% better than 2018 23% Worse than 2018 54% same as 2018
Looking ahead to trading in 2020 17% better than 2019 8% worse than 2019 75% the same as 2019
Investing in the business 50% looking to invest in 2019 21% not investing 29 Don't know yet
100% respondees looking to investing in goods and services
Comments on future trading: I feel that trade in Bridport is healthy generally - there will always be exceptions - but our lively street atmosphere, the market, other offerings and festivals which are very popular with the public - bring people into the town especially on Saturdays. The town "dies" by three o'clock on Saturdays We live in interesting times at the moment - I think the next year will be challenging but I believe that whatever the product or service a business offers, if it is a quality product or service in this town it will do well We are going much more customer service focused and revamping our shop for a better retail environment, so we are providing something different to the internet. We are adding as much added service to our products as possible

<p>Town Strengths</p> <p>Variety of independent business (x7)</p> <p>Street market and events (x4)</p> <p>St Michaels antique area. arts centre electric palace etc</p> <p>Community (x2)</p> <p>Customers love to support local businesses (x2)</p>	<p>Town Weaknesses</p> <p>Parking (x10) – not enough, parking fees</p> <p>Town centre congestion</p> <p>Too many Charity shops (x2)</p> <p>National multiples outlets</p> <p>Toilets</p> <p>Drugs</p>
<p>Opportunities for the Town</p> <p>Push Bridport as a 'destination' - Tourism and coach/bus parties</p> <p>More use of the outlying parts - river walk/ St Michaels needs signposting.</p> <p>Collective advertising</p> <p>Shut South Street, deliveries only</p> <p>Promoting cycling into the town centre</p> <p>More small retailers</p> <p>Shop local initiatives</p> <p>Young fashion outlets</p>	<p>Constraints for the Town:</p> <p>Parking (x4)</p> <p>Lack of Public transport (x2)</p>
<p>Comments</p> <p>We are fortunate in having a Town Council which really "gets" the importance of the vibrancy of the town centre. We have a good market with a wide range of different stalls.</p> <p>I would also like to say that we are fortunate in the team (from WDDC) who clean up our streets when they are covered in rubbish and would not make a good impression.</p> <p>I think flowers and baskets are very attractive in the town centre - and businesses should be encouraged to do more in this direction</p> <p>Roundabout approaches to town are poorly managed and could be more positive and welcoming.</p> <p>Considering the number of artists and artists sculptors in the area the amount of art on public display is poor</p> <p>A few years ago we were told that a 'pay on exit' scheme would be implemented. At the moment we have frustrated customers who are busy keeping an eye on their parking times rather than enjoying our town. Not conducive to persuading folk to part with their money</p> <p>Bridport has some very unique characteristics and I think we need to advertise the community we have here, especially with the sad increase in mental health issues. I do think that maybe they are linked. Before the internet you had to go out and get some shopping, the paper etc you had to interact with other people to survive no matter how you were feeling and maybe in that time you had an interaction that made you feel better about life. Now you can have everything delivered and can literally hide away from the world. As a retailer we have our customers chatting for ages sometimes about all sorts or irrelevant subjects but I think this is a good thing, as some may not have others to talk to</p> <p>I believe Bridport will be ok, but the shops will change to be a mix of nationals and short term independents, changing constantly.</p>	

More family friendly areas, more seating in green spaces, more bins, more toilets

The lack of public transportation from the surrounding villages, and also to the larger towns and education/business hubs is massively detrimental to the area