

Business Breakfast consultation

This consultation was held at the Black Buoy from 8-9 am on 20 February 2014 and was attended by 33 local business representatives. 8 apologies for absence were received and one written submission was entered.

Three questions had been prepared and each was dealt with in three parts:

- 1) comments on post-it notes being placed on the A1 question sheet;
- 2) free discussion on the basis of these and other comments
- 3) summarising points made.

The comments on post-it notes, and notes taken during the discussions were collated and form the basis of this summary.

Q1. What are the positives and negatives about having a business in Wivenhoe?

Common Themes Positives

Customer loyalty
Good transport and close to London
Great varied community that is safe
Easy access and parking

Other Comments

Attracted to village from outside. Attractive destination and environment
Top end parking and passing trade
Ease of commute. Commuter time

Good image of Wivenhoe as a place to go from people outside of the community
As a newcomer very positive
Size of town - enough to get business from but not too big, life balance e.g. collecting kids from school, low carbon impact (saves petrol and money)
Working close to home
Should be a good community feeling

Smaller community = greater customer loyalty, less competition, lower rates/rent, free parking
Chains aren't interested
Providing a service to the community
Small community. Getting to know your customers — repeat business
Word of mouth recommendations

Common themes negatives

Not enough parking
Low footfall
Not enough shops and office space
Need better communication between and about businesses

Other Comments

Traffic levels getting out in the morning
Peak time traffic

No good coffee shop to take my customers that come here from London
No clothes shop
No bank
High rent for shop space
Need more local advertising
Need more events to bring people to Wivenhoe
Not enough shops baker, butchers etc.

Very few businesses seem to stay open for long
Lack of accessible good quality flexible business space for start-ups
Lack of rent-able office space
Wivenhoe community like to keep trade in the community
Local support needs to be better

Can feel a bit isolated. Very little peer networking
More awareness of local trades i.e. could local businesses advertise other local businesses?
Lack of communications between town and the University
Need a better cycle path from Uni to Wivenhoe
Road access to business centre in poor condition
Access to and from town by road for deliveries is very restricted

Lack of Wivenhoe equivalent of yellow pages
Forum is too obscure

Q2. What local facilities or support does your business need to be more successful in this town?

Common Themes

Make Wivenhoe a destination
More parking
Refurbish the Engine Shed to turn it into a business centre
Bank
Business networking and events

Other Comments

Business listing. Business forum/Networking Group
Information about businesses at the railway station
Need greater public awareness of businesses
Better signage as to where things are, Information boards

Good quality business centre, accessible, flexible terms and decent rates
Do we need a central market place? e.g. Cedric's site
Encouragement by landlords. Subsidies to landlords from Council?
More space, like halls, rather than office space; like a multi-purpose community centre
Office space

We need more reasons to bring people in. A reason for people to come here.
Work on Wivenhoe divide.
Make more use of the former notoriety that lived in Wivenhoe i.e. blue plaque buildings
Map of business at the main car park and at the station
Signage from the quay, obvious routes and station to the shops and into the village
The engine shed would be an excellent craft/art centre like Dedham has which brings in trade by the bus load!
We need to make more of the art, history and culture of Wivenhoe.

We must not pull down the company shed as it will be taken for houses
Network Rail own the Engine Shed it should be refurbished or used for more car parking

Q3 & 4. Do you need a business centre or shared office space? If so where would it be best located

Common Theme

Yes

Turn the Engine Shed or Cedric's into office, business, art, mixed use space

Create commercial industrial centre and promote local employment

Other Comments

Units needed for small businesses required

Yes a mixed use space with a cafe, hall, small classrooms, meeting rooms, offices, exhibition space e.g. Engine Shed or Philip Road both have easy access and parking available or at Cedric's garage this is an excellent central location.

Art centre and business units attached

Need space for small lock-up businesses

Flexible work space where I can rent a small consulting room as required.

Office accommodation located at Cedric's Garage

Also temporary facilities to cover telephone messages when I am on holiday.

Reasonably priced artist studios needed

Businesses are essential to Wivenhoe it will become a sterile community without them

Need to aim for what Dedham has as a tourism location

Car parking fees must be fair across the town to provide a level playing field.

Bigger picture is needed, a commercial industrial estate to attract manufacturers and alike to promote employment locally

Existing business centre needs smartening up and improving. It is shabby and low quality and parking is an issue.

Very difficult to find new land for a new business centre due to farmland and the flood plain surrounding Wivenhoe.

Cedric's garage is an ideal location for a new business centre but it has outline planning permission.

Premises at football ground as it is easier to park and less congested.

We need an industrial site to increase jobs and this will then increase footfall. This is happening at the University but will this bring people into the town?

We need regular business meetings to increase communication, business connections and events. Wivenhoe networking group.

Community infrastructure levy can award small grants.