

Select Panel 3  
February - May 2012

attracting  
new business  
to rural areas



**BASSETLAW**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

[bassetlaw.gov.uk](http://bassetlaw.gov.uk)



# **Scrutiny is an Independent, Councillor-led Function, Working with Local People to Improve Services.**

## **Foreword**

This report of the 'Attracting New Business to Rural Bassetlaw' Panel describes the challenges and issues facing rural businesses in our district, scope of the review, methods used, evidence gathered and finally the recommendations made.

This review was assigned to Select Panel 3 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was raised as an issue by a Member that there had been a reduction of retail businesses in rural parts of the district and that the district had less businesses than the national average. The panel's ambition was to find ways to promote Bassetlaw's rural areas as attractive places for new business.

We were very grateful for the time given and the positive contribution from representatives of the Bassetlaw business community and from the voluntary and public sector organisations that work to promote business in Bassetlaw.

Recommendations are made about: developing broadband across the district, updating the business pages of BDC's website, assigning the role of promoting business in Bassetlaw to the Deputy Leader, assisting peer support groups such as Bassetlaw Enterprise Club and Bassetlaw Business Focus, and exploring how the council can work with local schools/college to develop enterprise education and encourage our young entrepreneurs of the future!

I would like to thank: the BDC officers involved for their skilful work and advice, and all the panel members who gave up their time, asked appropriate questions and put forward many of the ideas and suggestions in the recommendations.

John Shephard  
Chairman of Select Panel 3



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# 1. Executive Summary

## 1.1 Summary of Findings

The aims of this review were to look at how more business could be attracted to the rural areas of the district. This topic was chosen because the district has fewer businesses than the national average. There has also been a decline in the number of rural retail businesses in the district. Bassetlaw has considerably less self-employed people (6.5%) than the UK average. This is compounded with over half of new businesses failing within their first five years.

Bassetlaw has around 4,000 businesses of which 92% are classified as small businesses. Many of the small businesses in the rural areas are often run in homes with maybe only one or two employees.

The panel explored the difficulties new businesses face and how these could be addressed. During the review the panel interviewed fifteen people from a wide range of backgrounds and sectors. This included six small business owners, to find out what they thought would help small businesses to survive and how more new businesses could be attracted to the district.

There were several general themes that came through and these were: the need for faster broadband, better transport in rural areas, raising the profile of the district and communication - including the accessibility to information.

The review found that many of the small businesses in the rural areas were often run in homes with maybe only one or two employees. It also found that a large percentage people living in rural areas commute to urban areas and were using a lot of the services available in the towns such as post offices and supermarkets. This impacted on village shops and businesses.

The panel agreed a scope which covered these key issues and the key findings are outlined below:

Issues	Evidence
Broadband Connection	<p>The panel found that high speed data transfer and broadband connection was a key barrier for businesses and for potential new business. The panel looked at the national programme to rollout broadband in Nottinghamshire and how it was going to impact on the district as well as looking at local solutions.</p>
Education and Training	<p>Bassetlaw has more people with low literacy and numeracy skills than the county average<sup>1</sup>. This means there is a higher proportion of low skilled employment. The panel heard from a number of organisations that provide education and training. The issues raised were that transport was an issue for matching placements to young people. This also made it difficult for young people to get to training at the college. North Notts College now has a mini bus that collects students who are unable to access public transport.</p> <p>The college intertwine entrepreneurial skills into the foundation courses. Local businesses reported a gap in the transference of knowledge into working skills of young people.</p>
Marketing and Promotion of Bassetlaw's Unique Selling Points	<p>The panel identified the district's unique selling points; these included good transport links, high speed rail network, available property and business rates relief in some areas. Bassetlaw has potential to develop tourism in the district. It was thought a single point of contact for all business information would be useful in promoting the district. The panel also wanted to raise the profile of Bassetlaw as a good place for business by having a business champion.</p> <p>The panel found that marketing budgets were limited so networking events and opportunities were used to publicise businesses and services.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: DCSF Skills for Life survey

Issues	Evidence
Enterprise	<p>The review heard about several projects that encouraged young people into new enterprise ventures. The panel heard that Enterprise Days at the local schools had ceased. The panel was keen to find a way of giving young people an opportunity to explore enterprise.</p> <p>The economic situation meant that people were more risk averse to starting up a new business.</p> <p>The panel also found out what the Retford Enterprise Centre could offer new businesses - accommodation in an environmentally friendly building with high speed broadband and data voice connection, at a reasonable rent and a flexible contract. It also provides training and networking opportunities.</p>
The level of support for businesses in Bassetlaw.	<p>The panel heard that since the changes to Business Link were introduced there has been a reduction in the level of face to face support available for businesses. The local business community have set up support groups for existing and new businesses which has proven popular.</p> <p>Bassetlaw District Council provides a website with information for businesses. The review found that this is in need of developing and updating. For example the business directory on the website is two years out of date. Updating the directory would prove to be expensive so the panel discussed other possible ways of providing this information such as self-financing through advertisements.</p> <p>The panel heard that the third sector had started Bassetlaw Business Focus for existing businesses to provide peer support and specialised workshops. 25 local businesses had come together to volunteer to give new business and potentially self-employed people advice on finance, marketing and encouragement.</p>

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Issues	Evidence
How the Localism Act could be used to benefit rural areas in attracting new business.	The Localism Act has given rural areas new powers and these were explored. The panel heard that seven parishes were involved in Neighbourhood Plans and that the register of community assets was in progress. Training had been provided to parish councillors but it was agreed that some parish councils would still need further information about the new responsibilities and powers. These powers directly impact on planning and local people can decide on land allocated for businesses through neighbourhood plans. It also provides an opportunity for local people to bid for local community assets should they be put up for sale.

After hearing all of the evidence the panel made the following recommendations (those in bold are considered key recommendations):

	Recommendation
1.	<b>That rural broadband options are developed, with a view to rolling out in rural communities.</b>
2.	That Corporate Management Team considers appointing a Lead Officer to co-ordinate broadband delivery in the district.
3.	<b>That there are dedicated business pages that bring information together for businesses in an easily accessible format like <a href="http://www.aimatsuccess.co.uk/">http://www.aimatsuccess.co.uk/</a>. Including an updated version of the Business Directory.</b> <b>In the interim, the Panel would encourage the on-going updating of the business section of the Council website.</b>
4.	That a new leaflet/flyer is devised for new starter businesses; this should be linked to the business pages of the website.



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	Recommendation
5.	<b>That active engagement with the business community and proactive promotion of businesses in the District be achieved by the Deputy Leader and the Portfolio holder for Community Prosperity.</b>
6.	That the local business community are encouraged to become part of the Business Ambassador Scheme to work with the Council in promoting business and enterprise in the district.
7.	That the Council continues to encourage and support the Bassetlaw Enterprise Club which provides peer support for new businesses and the Bassetlaw Business Focus led by the Federation of Small Business to provide support and advice for all small businesses.
8.a	That the Council promotes the take up of the existing European LEADER funding which ends in 2013 in Bassetlaw.
8.b	That the Council encourages discussion with European LEADER funders to put in place an interim arrangement to bridge the gap during the period before the next round of LEADER begins in mid-2014
9.	That the First Enterprise Loan Scheme be promoted through the Business Section of the website for businesses who need a small loan ( <a href="http://www.first-enterprise.co.uk/small-loans/">http://www.first-enterprise.co.uk/small-loans/</a> ).
10.	That BDC explores how it can promote an enterprise event with the academies, colleges and the business community to promote enterprise skills and an interest in business among local young people.
11.	That BDC supports the principles of the Stemming the Tide project and other similar projects to provide work experience opportunities for young people in a rural setting.
12.	That the Local Strategic Partnership Transport and Accessibility Sub-Group explore alternative transport solutions with partners e.g. Bassetlaw Action Centre adaptable mini buses, 'dial a bus' and Wheels to Work schemes, be encouraged and progress reported to Overview and Scrutiny on a quarterly basis.
13.	That a rural ward councillor should be invited to be part of the Local Strategic Partnership Sub-Group for Transport and Accessibility.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for this review. This can be viewed at [www.bassetlaw.gov.uk](http://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk) under the Equality Section or by contacting the Policy and Scrutiny Unit on 01909 533189.

## 1.2 Scope of the Review

### Our Ambition

*To promote Bassetlaw's rural areas as an attractive place for new businesses.*

Our Scope	
• <b>Education and Training</b>	To explore how young people are informed about enterprise opportunities and the training available for young people thinking of starting up their own business
• <b>Broadband Connection</b>	To understand the broadband needs of rural areas and support the funding of broadband implementation.
• <b>Marketing and Promotion of Bassetlaw's Unique Selling Points</b>	To explore the opportunities of marketing and promoting the district to other areas.
• <b>Enterprise</b>	To look at some of the specific business sectors for development, including social enterprises.
• <b>Support for Businesses</b>	To explore the support available to businesses and where further support could be targeted. To explore what the council can influence to raise Bassetlaw's profile as an attractive place to start a business
• <b>Localism Act</b>	<p>To understand how the Localism Act can benefit businesses in the rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business rate discounts</li><li>• Community Right to Bid</li><li>• Neighbourhood Planning,</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How well do we perform at the moment?</b></li> </ul>	<p>Bassetlaw District Council works in Partnership to provide support and encouragement for new and existing businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively participate in funding bids</li> <li>• Provides business rate discounts</li> </ul>
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### 1.3 Membership

Councillor H. Brand	Councillor F. Hart
Councillor I Campbell	Councillor T. Rafferty
Councillor P. Douglas	Councillor J. Shephard
Councillor G. Freeman	Councillor A. Simpson
Councillor M. Gray	Councillor K. Sutton

## 1.4 Summary of Recommendations

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	<b>Delivery Timescale</b>	<b>Risks to delivery/ Officer Comment</b>
1.	That rural broadband options are developed, with a view to rolling out in rural communities.	Steve Brown Senior Manager Support Services	There is no specific budget. Funds are allocated to the Nottinghamshire Broadband Plan.	Up to March 2013	The detail of the delivery of the Nottinghamshire Broadband Plan is not yet known. This impacts on the development and viability of local projects.
2.	That Corporate Management Team considers appointing a Lead Officer to co-ordinate broadband delivery in the district.	Ros Theakstone Director of Corporate Services  Mark Ladyman Director of Community Services	None	September 2012	
3.	That there are dedicated business pages that bring information together for businesses in an easily accessible format like <a href="http://www.aimatsuccess.co.uk/">http://www.aimatsuccess.co.uk/</a> . Including an updated version of the Business Directory. In the interim the Panel would encourage the on-going updating of the business section of	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager  Jonathan Brassington, Communications Manager	Approx.£2k- from ED advertising budget	September 2012	Loss of ED admin staff (June 2012) & recruitment delays

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	<b>Delivery Timescale</b>	<b>Risks to delivery/ Officer Comment</b>
	the Council website.				
4.	That a new leaflet/flyer is devised for new starter businesses, this should be linked to the business pages of the website.	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager  Jonathan Brassington Communications Manager	£500	Post September 2012	Needs to reflect final feel of website. Admin comment as above  Communications will support Economic Development Manager when required
5.	That active engagement with the business community and proactive promotion of businesses in the District be achieved by the Deputy Leader and the Portfolio holder for Community Prosperity..	Ros Theakstone Director of Corporate Services	Member time	Ongoing	The remit falls properly within the Strategy portfolio and therefore could be assigned to the Deputy Leader.
6.	That the local business community are encouraged to become part of the Business Ambassador Scheme to work with the Council in promoting business and enterprise in the district.	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager	Officer time	Post April 2013	Part of the Invest in Bassetlaw project, subject to ERDF approval hence the delay in implementation
7.	That the Council continues to encourage and support the Bassetlaw Enterprise Club which	Robert Wilkinson Economic	Officer time	Current and on-	Risk: loss of key staff, continued business

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	<b>Delivery Timescale</b>	<b>Risks to delivery/ Officer Comment</b>
	provides peer support for new businesses and the Bassetlaw Business Focus led by the Federation of Small Business to provide support and advice for all small businesses.	Development Manager		going	engagement
8.a	That the Council promotes the take up of the existing European LEADER funding which ends in 2013 in Bassetlaw	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager	£10k p.a (as at present) from BDC. Also has same contribution from N&SDC and NCC. Future programme uncertain on scope and geography plus match funding.	December 2013	LEADER currently under review by EU/BIS/Defra and timescales for next round uncertain. Main risk is the loss of key staff as the current programme ends before committing to new round
8.b.	That the Council encourages discussion with European LEADER funders to put in place an interim arrangement to bridge the gap during the period before the next round of LEADER begins in mid-2014.				
9.	That the First Enterprise Loan Scheme be promoted through the Business Section of the website for businesses who need a small loan ( <a href="http://www.first-enterprise.co.uk/small-loans/">http://www.first-enterprise.co.uk/small-loans/</a> ).	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager	None	September 2012	
10.	That BDC explores how it can promote an enterprise event with the academies, colleges and the business community to promote enterprise skills and an interest in	Robert Wilkinson Economic Development Manager	£1k (venue, catering, marketing)	April 2013	Requires involvement (& recruitment) of business representatives

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	<b>Delivery Timescale</b>	<b>Risks to delivery/ Officer Comment</b>
	business among local young people.				
11.	That BDC supports the principles of the Stemming the Tide project and other similar projects to provide work experience opportunities for young people in a rural setting.	Steve Brown Senior Manager Support Services	None	April 2013	Project is subject to external funding bids
12.	That the work of the Local Strategic Partnership Sub-Group Accessibility and Transport, to explore alternative transport solutions with partners e.g. Bassetlaw Action Centre adaptable mini buses, 'Dial a Bus' and Wheels to Work schemes, be encouraged and progress reported to Overview and Scrutiny on a quarterly basis.	Steve Brown Senior Manager Support Services	None	September 2012	
13.	That a rural ward councillor should be invited to be part of the Local Strategic Partnership Sub-Group for Transport and Accessibility.	Steve Brown Senior Manager Support Services	None	July 2012	Sub Group would welcome rep.



## 2. Background

Bassetlaw is situated in North Nottinghamshire. The District is described as predominantly rural by the Rural Services Network, with 63.7% of Bassetlaw being identified as rural. For professional people quality of life is more important than the convenience of services. Professionals with non-client facing businesses often work at home. Also rural areas were not seeking to attract large businesses that would detract from the rural lifestyle.

Bassetlaw has a wide range of businesses but the key business sectors are construction, retail and agriculture and fisheries. The sectors under-represented in Bassetlaw are finance and tourism. Bassetlaw has around 4000 businesses in the district and 92% of these are small businesses (Appendix 1). There are 9.1% self-employed people in the UK compared with 6.5% in Bassetlaw. The survival rate in Bassetlaw of businesses reaching five years old is 42% compared with the national figure 52%. Catering is the trade most likely to fail, with health and education the most likely to succeed. A large percentage of people living in rural areas commute to urban areas and are using a lot of services available in the towns, such as post offices and supermarkets. This impacted on village shops and businesses.

The district has benefits from good road links to motorway networks and the high speed rail link from London. It also borders three counties: Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire. Bassetlaw benefits from its location because it can work in partnership with both Nottingham and Sheffield to bid for investment in the district. Work is currently being undertaken for a £200k bid for a three year project called Invest in Bassetlaw. The project will include developing a brand, promoting the area and also includes public transport, place shaping and consultation. The project will target neighbouring areas such as Rotherham and Gainsborough.

## 3. Method of Review

This review was assigned to Select Panel 3 by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was raised as an issue by a Member that there had been a reduction of retail businesses in rural parts of the district and that the district had less businesses than the national average. The panel's ambition was to find ways to promote Bassetlaw's rural areas as attractive places for new business.

The panel had to first agree the definition of rural for the purpose of the review. This was decided by using the definition used by Sparse Rural which states that Bassetlaw is 63.7% rural and included Retford one of the district's market towns. The scope covered six key areas as well as looking at how the council currently performs.

The review invited witnesses from local business owners, funders and partners to contribute.

### 3.1 Summary of Review Meetings and External visits

Meeting	Witnesses	Evidence Gathered
Scoping Meeting 14 <sup>th</sup> February	Robert Wilkinson – Economic Development Manager	Defined rural for the purpose of the review. Decided the scope.  Gathered information about Business Link, Business Enterprise Club and Bassetlaw Business Focus.
7 <sup>th</sup> March 2012	Steve Walker – Manager, Retford Enterprise Centre Jon Rogers – Managing Director of Createinn	What the Retford Enterprise Centre has to offer new businesses. Accommodation, Meeting rooms and support. Bassetlaw Business Focus was launched at the centre. Jon Rogers provided an insight to running your own business and how Retford Enterprise Centre has benefitted his business.
14 <sup>th</sup> March	Steve Brown – Senior Support Services Manager Daniel Watson – Economic Development Officer	Broadband connection and speeds currently in rural areas. The progress made with regard to the funding of Broadband.  Point to Point connection using microwaves to share broadband capacity from the Retford Enterprise Centre.
28 <sup>th</sup> March	Ian Layton – Stemming the Tide David Hogg – The Prince's Trust Andrew Sale – Sheffield City College	Stemming the Tide is a project to help young people who aspire to live and work in rural areas get training and employment opportunities.  The Prince's Trust is about to launch a project called the Enterprise



## 4. Addressing the Scope: Evidence Gathered for Recommendations

### 4.1 Education and Training

Nationally 10% of young people live in villages and up to 30% if market towns are included. In Bassetlaw this is twice as high as the national average. 70% of young people aspire to remain in the rural setting near friends and family. The Rural Commission says that it is impossible for young people to remain in rural areas and that coerced migration is due to house prices, which are typically higher in rural areas, ineffective transport, access to careers and lack of governance.

Most companies in the countryside are SMEs (Small, Middle sized Enterprises) with less than 50 employees, but more often there is only one or two employees. These companies often recruit by word of mouth. There is a perception amongst employers that young people do not have the skills to work in their businesses. In a recent OFSTED Good Practice Report Apprenticeships for Young People a number of recommendations were made to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Education that they should:

- improve the national availability of careers guidance on post-16 options
- promote clear pathways for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) that lead to apprenticeships
- gather data on the number of young people who apply for an apprenticeship but are unsuccessful
- encourage the development of recognised progression routes for advanced apprentices such as higher apprenticeships and foundation degrees that meet the needs of employers.

Secondary schools should:

- provide students with training and guidance to support applications, particularly online
- improve the local co-ordination of work experience across a wider time frame so that willing employers can respond to more requests

During the review the panel heard from a number of local organisations and projects about the type of opportunities available.

### Sheffield City College

The panel invited Sheffield City College which runs Enterprise Courses as well as providing Enterprise Gateways. The College had been successful in the creation of new business. The Peter Jones Academy is where students can do a BTEC Diploma course. These courses help young people who are interested in starting up their own business. All of the assignments are based around their own business. They don't all end up running their own business; some go onto higher education or employment. However, around a third of them do end up running their own business.

Business advisors are available to any student in the college no matter which course they are taking. They provide support and advice for those wanting to start their own business. The Enterprise Gateways are connected with the Business Advisors and they provide a one-stop-shop for support and advice about starting up your own business. However the one stop shop doesn't have to be at college it could be anywhere.

Unemployed people over the age of 19 who want to start their own business are referred to the College by the Job Centre. There is an eight week programme which is funded so there is no cost to unemployed adults. We have a success rate of between 60-70% of completing the course and starting a business. Online business is particularly successful, gift shop and web design are a few examples. All learners get business advice for up to a year.

The College also supports the Big Challenge Awards. This is an annual event aimed at Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils. 30 schools were involved this year. Each entry gets a £25 loan to set up the business. This gives young people an opportunity to try business ideas out at an early age.

The College held Enterprise Academies - a week long course to introduce young people to the idea of starting up a business. This was a way of getting young people who are not in education, employment or training across the threshold and provides student services with an opportunity to liaise with them.

The College has the benefit of being in a city with good access to the internet and transport services. It also has the backing of the University and has ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) funding.

### North Nottinghamshire College

North Nottinghamshire College of Further Education (NNC) similarly embeds enterprise and employability into its curriculum. Last year it held an Enterprise Day with 70 students and three local entrepreneurs to have their business ideas and plans judged. It also has between 300-350 apprenticeships in progress. This is not the only provider of apprenticeships in the district, Enable place apprentices in the Voluntary Sector and there are training agencies that also offer apprenticeship.

The college provides transport to collect rural students who are unable to get to the college via public transport. It also takes students from the college to the Turbine for placements due to the lack of public transport to the centre.

One of the difficulties the college has experienced is matching students to some of the rural businesses because of the transport issue. This means that young people in rural areas are unable to take up opportunities and similarly rural businesses find it difficult to get an apprentice because of the transport issue.

### Prince's Trust

The Prince's Trust came to the review to talk about a new project they are about to launch in the East Midlands area. Previously there had been the Enterprise Programme which lasted 2 years under a Business Link Partnership venture in Bassetlaw and Mansfield. Out of the project three businesses were started.

- Motorbike Sales – Retford
- Face Painting and Entertainment – Harworth
- Hairdressing – Misterton (a second shop is now open in South Yorkshire)

The new project will build on the Enterprise Programme. The Prince's Trust has secured ERDF funding over the next three years to focus on increasing the number of people in new business and working with those who are 18 – 30 years old not in education, employment or training. There will be targeted outreach, out of hours in youth clubs, community centres and other settings where young people meet. Those interested in self-employment will be offered encouragement and support. There will be a four day workshop to explore enterprise to see if this is for them. The programme will look at their finances, Personal Development Plan, soft skill areas and build confidence and team building skills. There will also be the chance to meet someone who has gone through the process and hear about their experiences.

Young people who decide not to start a business are given six months progression mentoring to help them get employment. Those that decide on self-employment receive intensive support on a one to one basis. £1,000 grant and work with local banks to access further funding. There is also a Business Survival and Growth Mentor for extra support. The aim is to have 90% of businesses still trading after one year and 70% after two years. There will also be surgeries where problems can be discussed with experts and mentors who give their time voluntarily.

It hoped that the project will support 57 people over three years and that from that 14 new businesses would be created, with one employing someone else. However, the panel noted that this project is covering quite a large area and therefore the opportunities in Bassetlaw may not be widely available.

### Stemming the Tide

The panel heard about a scheme that will be aimed at 16 to 25 year olds who aspire to make their future in the rural community. Stemming the Tide wants to develop a successful apprenticeship project called 'Farmers of the Future' which was set up by Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services (UTASS). This project successfully helped 85% of the young people involved in the project to get agricultural jobs following training. Stemming the Tide wants to broaden the range of services and businesses involved so it is not just focused on agriculture.

The scheme is aimed at 16 to 25 year olds who aspire to make their future in the rural community. Each person will have a personalised learning plan and develop soft skills such as politeness, honesty and punctuality. They will have ten week placements in village shops and businesses. This will prove that they have employability. The project will be over a period of ten months, will include two days a week in college, two days vocational training and one day a week learning about the rural economy, recruitment skills. At the end of the of the project there will be a job fair and those employers that have provided vocational training will provide feedback to all the employers there. It is hoped that this will encourage more businesses to provide opportunities. Once the scheme is up and running initially 12 young people will be selected to be on the project.

The benefits of work experience have been shown in a recent assessment of the Government's Work Experience programme<sup>2</sup>, which showed that about 28% of young people were more likely to be in employment after work experience

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<sup>2</sup> *Early Impacts of Work Experience DWP 2011*

than those who did not. However, the assessment does not take into account where these placements are available (urban or rural locations) or the locality of young people taking part.

The panel also identified apprenticeships as another way of supporting small business and providing training for people. Rural business found it hard to get an apprentice because of the difficulty of access and students were unable to take up an apprenticeship because of transport. It recommended that the subject of apprenticeships should be put forward for a future scrutiny review.

One of the barriers highlighted during the review was rural transport and the ability to be able to get to work or training in urban areas from the villages. Public transport is not accessible or is not flexible enough. This project will offer young people the opportunity to learn to drive as it sees this as a key skill for young people in rural areas. The panel was keenly aware of the difficulties facing people in rural areas in getting around. The 'Wheels to Work project' run through RCAN also tries to address this problem by providing scooters to people most in need. There is a large demand and unfortunately not enough bikes. Funding for the project is also being affected by the cuts to the County Council.

The panel was pleased to hear that some small employers have provided transport to ensure employees can get to and from work. However this was not the norm and the panel felt that public transport in rural areas needs to be looked at. The panel wanted to raise the profile of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Transport and Accessibility Sub Group which meets regularly with providers of transport and partners to find solutions to accessibility. It is hoped that Members will be able to support the work of this group through Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Recommendations**

- That BDC supports the principles of the Stemming the Tide project and other similar projects to provide work experience opportunities for young people in a rural setting.
- That the work of the Local Strategic Partnership Transport and Accessibility Sub-Group, to explore alternative transport solutions with partners e.g. Bassetlaw Action Centre adaptable mini buses, 'Dial a Bus' and Wheels to Work schemes, be encouraged and progress reported to Overview and Scrutiny on a quarterly basis.
- That a rural ward councillor should be invited to be part of the Local Strategic Partnership Sub-Group for Transport and Accessibility.



## 4.2 Broadband Connection

It is now universally understood that broadband connection is no longer a nice extra but an essential part of day to day living. It is essential for businesses that not only require broadband but require fast upload speeds to be effective in their day to day business. It was also highlighted that many new businesses are web based, which means the lack of broadband in rural areas is another barrier for new businesses.

Bassetlaw is amongst the districts in Nottinghamshire with the slowest speeds of broadband, and has many rural areas that have little or no broadband. This can be seen in figure 1:

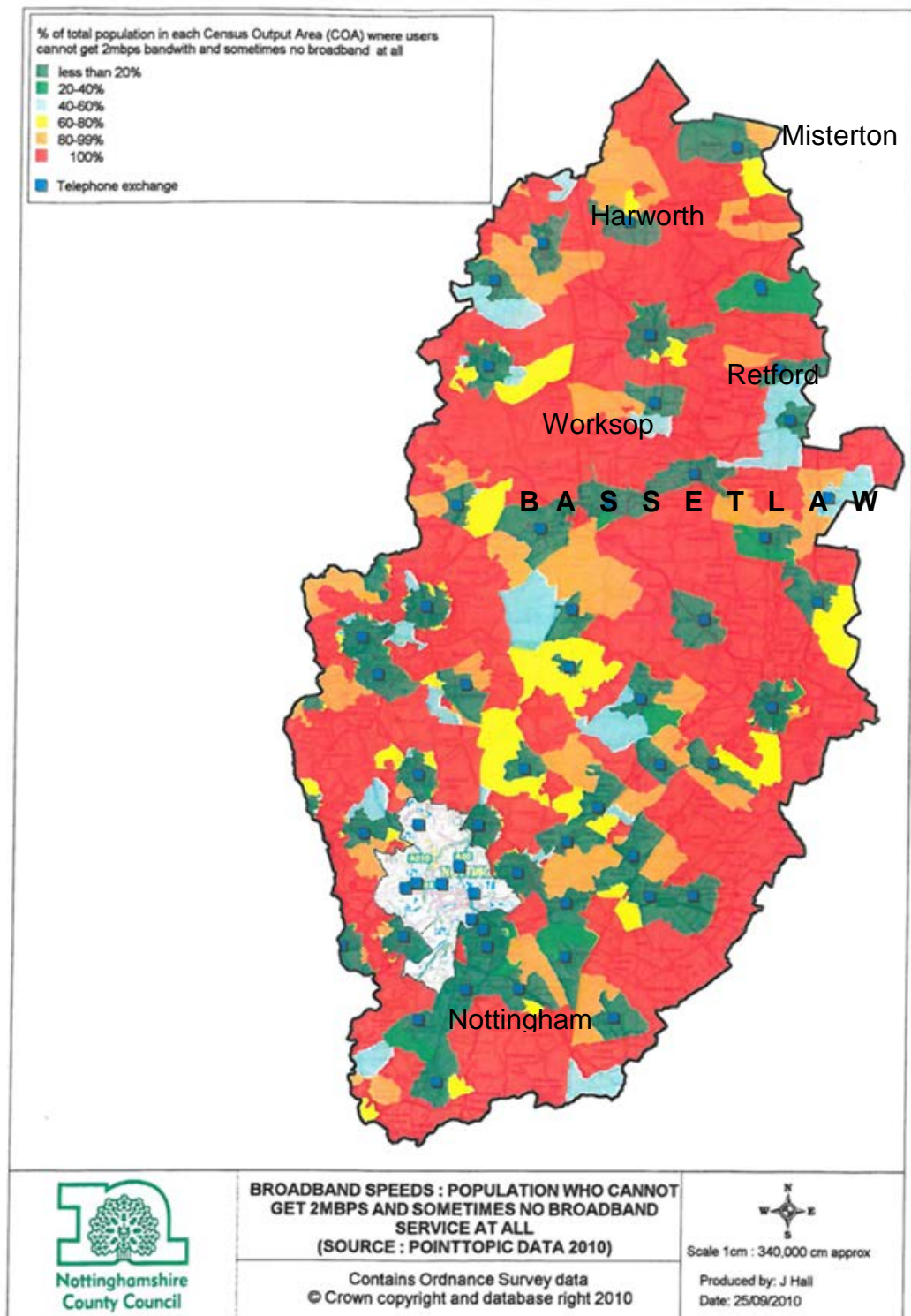
A recent survey of residents in a rural parish reported them being frustrated and unhappy with the broadband connection. Over two thirds of respondents used the internet for work or study (Appendix 2.). The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) 'Voice of Small Business' Panel Survey of more than 3,000 members shows that 63% of small firms are dissatisfied with the speed of their broadband connection compared to 48% of businesses in urban areas.

The Government has allocated £4.25 million to provide faster broadband speeds in rural areas in Nottinghamshire, as part of its plan to deliver and upgrade broadband provision.

About a third of Nottinghamshire homes and businesses remain on the wrong side of the private sector's plans to roll-out superfast broadband and it is these areas that will be targeted by the Nottinghamshire Local Broadband Plan. This could potentially benefit 47,799 premises in Bassetlaw. In rural parts of the district fibre optic broadband may not be practical so other options are being considered such as satellite. However the rollout of broadband could take between three to five years in some parts.

During the review the panel heard about an innovative idea to use a microwave link to deliver high speed broadband, this idea is currently being explored as a possible option and could reduce the costs linked with fibre optic broadband which is very expensive if cables need to be laid. The Retford Enterprise Centre has high speed broadband and data voice connection. The centre currently uses around 10% of the broadband capacity and is currently working on a project to provide other businesses with some of the surplus capacity.

Figure1.



The review also looked at community cooperatives in other rural areas such as Lincolnshire as a way for local communities to purchase broadband; this involves local people and businesses buying shares in the scheme to fund the implementation.

Broadband will be improved in the district it is just a matter of time, however to ensure that the various projects are delivered, the panel thought there should be a lead officer who can be a point of contact on the issue and ensure that partners are kept aware of local developments.

### **Recommendations**

- That rural broadband options are developed, with a view to rolling out in rural communities.
- That Corporate Management Team considers appointing a Lead Officer to co-ordinate broadband delivery in the district.

## **4.3 Marketing and Promotion of Bassetlaw's Unique Selling Points**

Bassetlaw is situated in North Nottinghamshire and has excellent links to the motorway networks, as well as having a high speed rail link between London and the East Coast. The Council is looking for opportunities to promote the district by advertising at key stations along the rail link. Properties are less expensive in Bassetlaw than in some parts and can offer discount in business rates dependant on where the business is situated and the rateable value. Established businesses wishing to expand could set up a satellite base or virtual office. The panel found that there were efforts being made in terms of promotion by the Council through the website and networking. There was also a lot of effort put into working with partners to attract funding to the district. However there was still plenty that could be done to promote Bassetlaw and bring business from outside the area to the district.

Within Bassetlaw is Clumber Park, one of the most visited National Trust attractions in England, Mr Straws House, and it is also the home of the Pilgrim Fathers. There are other tourist attractions just outside of the district, such as Rufford Park,

Sherwood Forest and Southwell Minister, which means Bassetlaw is a good base for exploring. However Bassetlaw does not have an abundance of hotels or bed and breakfast establishments. Bassetlaw has 300 beds compared with our neighbouring district Newark and Sherwood which has 1100 beds. It was recently highlighted in the Pride in Bassetlaw Scrutiny Review that Bassetlaw has a lot to offer visitors and the majority of visitors are day visitors. Tourism is a potential sector that could be expanded.

The panel heard from the owner of the Vale of York Polo Club who had been attracted to Bassetlaw from York. He took the opportunity to diversify a redundant dairy farm in Misson into stables and a polo field. He explained that when he moved his business to the district that some queried the need for a Polo Club in the district. He has subsequently proved the move to be a successful one with the growth in business. He said “the area is ideal to attract people to the sport” Many of his clients are from outside of the district but they are bringing their business into Bassetlaw and this has had a ripple effect with the need for hotels and restaurants when polo competitions are taking place.

During the review Members heard that Bassetlaw had a number of empty business properties and shops available. It was thought that if the list of available properties, costs and rates was linked to the business section then that would be useful for people looking for business premises. It was also agreed that the Council should work with landlords with empty shops to try and get them occupied.

The review believed that greater use of the website as a promotional tool was essential in bringing business into the area. The need to bring information about available properties, funding, and support networks should all be in one place to help prospective businesses in setting up business and to continue to grow. The panel heard from the North Nottinghamshire Business Connection, which produces a monthly magazine promoting local business and providing helpful information. The panel thought this and other similar organisations should be linked to the website.

Another issue raised was the business directory held on the Council's website and the need to get it updated. The panel were told that it would cost around £3000 to update the directory. Members felt that the business directory was a valuable document for those looking for a business or service and the cost of updating the directory could be gained from advertising or other means. The directory it was agreed should sit on the improved website.

The panel heard about the proposed introduction of a Business Ambassador Scheme which involves getting local businesses involved in the promotion of the district. There are three levels of membership Gold, Silver and Bronze. Each

business pays a fee dependent on the level of membership, although businesses that don't become members can still be involved in the scheme which is used to promote the area, but more importantly they are involved in shaping the district.

Bassetlaw District Council and partners have made a £2,000 bid for a three year project called 'Invest in Bassetlaw'. This project is literally about putting Bassetlaw on the map by creating a visual brand as an attractive place to work, invest, visit and live, thereby increasing new business investment, increased visitor numbers and residents appreciation of the locale's distinctiveness. It is hoped it will attract a minimum of 15 new businesses and 30 new jobs by June 2015, helping to redress the present low business stock, low level of enterprise and low level of business investment into the area.

The panel also heard about the North Notts Business Awards, which the Council was able to support with funding in 2011. It was reported that this was a celebration of business in the district; however Members were unaware of it. It was thought that this event and other similar events should be better communicated to Members so that they can support these events and local businesses.

#### Recommendation

- That there are dedicated businesses pages that bring information together for businesses in an easily accessible format like <http://www.aimatsuccess.co.uk/>. Including an updated version of the Business Directory. In the interim the Panel would encourage the on-going updating of the business section of the Council website
- That a new leaflet/flyer is devised for new starter businesses, this should be linked to the business pages of the website.
- That the local business community are encouraged to become part of the Business Ambassador Scheme to work with the Council in promoting business and enterprise in the district.

## 4.4 Enterprise

The panel heard from a number of small businesses in the district. They were able to provide an insight into some of the difficulties they faced and also what could be done to improve the support for businesses. The review heard from the Vale of York Polo Club who provides lessons and opportunities for polo matches. The business had grown since receiving some Leader funding and is now an accredited Polo Club bringing in business for the district's hotels and restaurants.

The panel heard from Sheffield College and how they provide opportunities for students to be enterprising and have a course that is tailored to entrepreneurship. They also have business advisors on the college site to provide students with advice about starting up your own business. The college is also involved in the Big Challenge Awards that involves secondary schools and colleges. Students are encouraged to enter their inspirational enterprise successes (business ideas products, services and marketing) into the awards.. The college reported that this had been so successful that the Enterprise Days were now being taken into primary schools as well as secondary schools.

In Bassetlaw Enterprise Days no longer take place since the introduction of the academies. Members felt that opportunities like the Enterprise Days should be made available to young people perhaps in an alternative setting.

One of the things people worry about is the sustainability of their business idea is sustainable Business Focus provides an opportunity for new businesses to get advice and help with existing business people. They can test their business plan out and get advice about how to get started. The Council will be providing free market stalls for budding entrepreneurs to test their trade during 'Love your Market Week' at Bassetlaw's busy markets

### Recommendation

- That BDC explores how it can promote an enterprise event with the academies, colleges and the business community to promote enterprise skills and an interest in business among local young people

## 4.5 Support for Businesses

The panel heard that there had been some significant changes to Business Link operations, which is now predominantly web based, this has significantly left small businesses without the vital face to face support it used to provide. Locally the business community have tried to bridge the gaps with introduction of the Business Enterprise Club and Bassetlaw Business Focus.

### Business Enterprise Club

25 local business owners have volunteered to give new and potential self-employed people advice on finance marketing and encouragement. Job Centre Plus also attends. This support in no way replaces the serviced previously offered by Business Link but it tries to share their experience and point them in the right direction.

### Business Focus

This group has been set up to provide support and information for existing business it provides peer support and specialised workshops. This group had its first meeting in March at the Retford Enterprise Centre.

### Funding

The difficulty with cash flow was raised by business owners and the inability to get banks to lend at this time. The problem for small businesses is that they rely on money coming in from those they supply to pay their staff and creditors. If they are in a chain and there is a cash flow problem this can be detrimental for small businesses because they find it difficult to access additional funds easily. Also small businesses find it hard to find funding opportunities because they are not looking for large sums of funding. The criteria for funding is often very specific and for match funded bids they have to be able to pay for the items or service the bid is covering in full before they get the funding. It also can be time limited which can put them under pressure.

Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood make up the North Notts LEADER Project. LEADER is a European and Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) funded project to support and sustain the rural economy. They successfully obtained £1.5 million funding but this was reduced to £1.3 million due to government cuts. They have spent

over £1.16 million in the last three years and is recognised as a successful project. LEADER has funded 12 projects in Bassetlaw, 6 in Newark and Sherwood and a shared project so far. The funding has very specific criteria and has been used to support:

- Diversification such as barn conversion.
- Micro enterprise - businesses with less than 10 people.
- Bespoke training
- Tourism.
- The creation of 37 jobs.

The funding which is match funded starts at £3,500 (total cost of project £7,000) and while there is no definite limit but amounts of £30,000 – £40,000 are recommended as a limit. The process is intensive and can take some time. The European funding ends in 2013, when it is hoped there will be a new funding stream. However it is unlikely there will be a decision about the new funding stream until mid-2014 with the current Eurozone crisis. This means that unless something is put in place to bridge the gap the very well trained staff will not be able to be retained and all the knowledge and experience gained would be lost.

- Other funding opportunities are Rural Development Programme for England - supports rural areas in a number of ways which recognises the connections between agricultural and economic development, environmental stewardship and community sustainability
- Rural Grow Enterprise - provides business advice and works with businesses to help with funding bids for projects.
- Regional Growth Fund (RGF) which is in its third funding round. The minimum amount of RGF funding that can be applied for, “the Bid Threshold,” is £1million, which rules out most rural businesses.

Bassetlaw District Council funds the Bassetlaw Enterprise Board with a budget of £124,100 for match funded grants. The Bassetlaw Enterprise Board was established in 1997 and provides small grants for local businesses. The maximum grant is £1,500 with the exception of businesses in Worksop town centre where there is a limit of £2,500. This is because Worksop town centre has always had a lower occupancy rate than Retford. A breakdown of the applicants reveals that 35% are from rural areas. As a result 87 of the successful applicants have created 113 full-time jobs and 61 part-time jobs.



Recently the Bassetlaw Enterprise Board has introduced the New Enterprise Finance Scheme. This aims to overcome the difficulty which new start businesses face in terms of their equity capital investment at start-up where cash flow is a critical factor in the sustainability of the venture. The £1,000 grant will give the business the opportunity to purchase essential equipment but also poses an incentive to them to provide evidence of purchases, otherwise grant repayment applies.

### Business Rates

The Government introduced the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme (SBRR) in 2005. Business rates are calculated by two factors one is the rateable value and the other is the multiplier also known as the 'rate poundage'. These are controlled by central government. There is a multiplier lower in value for those who do not qualify for rate relief and a higher value for those that do not qualify.

Those businesses that have a rateable value less than £6,000 will receive 100% relief for the period 1st year and after that, will receive relief at 50%. Those that have a rateable value over £6,000 but less than £12,000 will receive relief on a sliding scale. Businesses with a rateable value of £12,000 and £18,000 will be calculated using the lower value multiplier.

The rural business rate relief scheme is aimed at supporting rural businesses which provide benefit to the local community. There are two types of relief, mandatory (50%) and discretionary which can be awarded in addition to mandatory.

For sole providers in a village i.e. the only one providing the service, there is a mandatory 50% reduction and a discretionary rebate up to 50% by the Local Authority. Bassetlaw currently give the full 50% relief meaning the business gets 100% rate relief in total.

### Recommendations

- That active engagement with the business community and proactive promotion of businesses in the District be achieved by the Deputy Leader and the Portfolio holder for Community Prosperity.
- That the Council continues to encourage and support the Bassetlaw Enterprise Club which provides peer support for new businesses and the Bassetlaw Business Focus led by the Federation of Small Business to provide support and advice for all small businesses.

#### Recommendations

- That the Council promotes the take up of the existing European LEADER funding which ends in 2013 in Bassetlaw
- That the Council encourages discussion with European LEADER funders to put in place an interim arrangement to bridge the gap during the period before the next round of LEADER begins in mid-2014.
- That the First Enterprise Loan Scheme be promoted through the Business Section of the website for businesses who need a small loan (<http://www.first-enterprise.co.uk/small-loans/>).□

## 4.6 Localism Act

The Localism Act presents rural communities with a number of options and these were explored during the review.

There are five main areas:

### **Neighbourhood Plans**

The Localism Act allows local parishes to produce their own plans. This means they can produce a land use plan with planning policies that can, for example, allocate land for new houses, shops and offices. These plans provide a greater level of local detail than the Council's Local Plan.

The process to get a Neighbourhood Plan in place is lengthy and does cost a reasonable amount of money. If a Plan is produced, it has to be agreed and supported by a referendum of the whole community. The Plan also has to agree with national policy and legislation.

Employment land is not generally allocated outside of urban areas such as Worksop, Retford and Harworth. However the council could consider some employment areas in rural parts of the district that would be of economic benefit. Misterton

Parish Council is currently looking at economic opportunities. The Council is also working with seven Parish Councils on Neighbourhood Plans.

### **Neighbourhood Development Order**

This effectively allows local areas to give planning permission for certain types of development. Preferably it should be linked to a Neighbourhood Plan i.e. the site for a new shop could be identified. A Neighbourhood Development Order would in effect get planning permission for a shop to be built. This could not be used for a block development.

### **Community Right to Bid**

Community Groups and Parish Councils are able to propose buildings that are a vital amenity to the local community like a pub or shop. The buildings are known as a community asset. If the owner of one of these assets puts it up for sale then a moratorium is put in place to allow the community group time to raise funds to takeover or buy the asset.

There are some issues around this and the Government guidance has not been published yet.

There are concerns around whether, for example, an owner would be able to claim compensation for loss of profit should the value of the asset change during the moratorium.

### **Community Right to Build**

Community Right to Build allows community groups to bring forward a development geared towards housing (perhaps through a Community Land Trust) or small-scale rural business units. This would need to be adopted by the local community through a referendum.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The levy is a 'tax' on new floor space. The levy comes from developers undertaking new building projects and is used to fund new infrastructure. A meaningful proportion of the funds collected needs to go back into the local community. The money can

be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure. This includes new or safer road schemes or any infrastructure for the local community or rural business growth.

During the Planning Policy team's consultation work on site allocations it also collected details of community assets. This will be taken further once we receive the Government guidance. The team has also run three training sessions for Parish Councils regarding the Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Planning. Seven Parish Councils are meeting to discuss Neighbourhood Plans. There is some uncertainty about how some of these powers will work and the Council is waiting for guidance from the Government.

## 5. Conclusion

The review found that Bassetlaw has fewer self-employed people and therefore businesses compared to the national average. It also found that 92% of businesses are small businesses with less than 50 employees but often they are much smaller than that. It was also clear that the economic downturn has impacted on local businesses and that cash flow and borrowing are real issues, contributing to businesses failing in the early years.

The panel carried out this review by gathering evidence from the local business community, project managers, colleges and the third sector. This evidence was tested against other sources of information and robust recommendations have been made.

The review highlights barriers to rural business, these included: broadband, transport, planning and communication. Broadband was a key area for discussion as in many rural areas there is little or no broadband and the data speeds are unable to transfer the amount of data that businesses need. Broadband is necessary for communication, sales, transferring files, payments and much more. Although Bassetlaw is part of the Government's plan to roll out broadband across rural areas the time frame is two/three years. The panel looked for alternative provision during the review.

Transport was another key area which affects businesses. The public transport system is not able to provide the necessary services to get people to work, college and training effectively. This means people in rural areas find it harder to get work and rural business harder to get employees.

The review found that new businesses that got support are 15% more likely to survive. This support has been provided by Business Link, however, due to government cutbacks, this has meant a reduction in the service Business Link can provide. It now is a web based service with a call centre function. This leaves a gap in the face to face support available. The local business community has set up two groups to offer support to existing businesses and new businesses. These cannot provide the level of support that Business Link did but they can provide advice and signposting.

It is clear that there is a communication problem and a difficulty in accessing information. Networking is the main way local businesses market themselves. Marketing budgets are low and so networking is popular. The panel were interested in how rural businesses find out about opportunities and funding. North Notts Business Connections produce a monthly magazine with information and set up networking events. Retford Enterprise Centre also hosts business events.

The review also found that the business information on the BDC website is often difficult to find and discussed the possibility of having an external website, with all business information linked with third parties and the updating of the business directory.

Bassetlaw's unique selling points were explored and how they could be used to attract business. Bassetlaw is relatively unknown so the benefits of the attractive location, good road network and the high speed rail link needed to be promoted. The review found that the cost of property is lower than other areas. A bid has been put together for a three year project called 'Invest in Bassetlaw' to provide funding to promote the area to potential business investors.

The review also looked at education and training opportunities. It found that there were limited opportunities for training in specific enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. Most of the basic skills are interwoven into the standard courses. It was also reported that many young people are not able to transfer their knowledge into work skills. This is a national problem and the panel suggested that local business and education and training organisations should meet to discuss these issues. There is a Sheffield Work and Skills Board linked to the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership which is in dialogue with Government and is working with the different sectors to identify the specific skills needs so they can begin work to tackle the key skills issues.<sup>3</sup> Locally there have been Pre-Employment Gateways that provide an opportunity for unemployed people to get the skills employers want. They are guaranteed an interview and they have a 70% success rate for people getting employment.

The subject of apprenticeships was touched upon but the panel felt that the topic should be put forward for a future scrutiny review.

The Localism Act has given parish councils a range of new powers and the possible benefits were discussed during the review. It was clear that there is still some uncertainty how these powers would work in practice. Seven parish councils are currently developing Neighbourhood Plans that would allow them to identify land for employment.

There are no simple answers to the question of how to attract new business into Bassetlaw's rural economy. This review has identified some of the key issues and how these might be addressed.

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<sup>3</sup> Minutes of the Sheffield City Region LEP Board Meeting  
held on Monday 19 December 2011

## 6. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Business Sectors in Bassetlaw

<b>March 2011</b>	<b>Bassetlaw</b>		<b>East Midlands</b>		<b>England</b>	
<b>Agriculture, forestry &amp; fishing</b>	<b>375</b>	9.1%	<b>10,620</b>	6.2%	<b>94,640</b>	4.4%
<b>Production</b>	<b>365</b>	8.8%	<b>13,325</b>	7.8%	<b>126,145</b>	5.8%
<b>Construction</b>	<b>455</b>	11.0%	<b>19,340</b>	11.3%	<b>231,020</b>	10.7%
<b>Motor trades</b>	<b>185</b>	4.5%	<b>6,465</b>	3.8%	<b>64,785</b>	3.0%
<b>Wholesale</b>	<b>210</b>	5.1%	<b>9,350</b>	5.4%	<b>108,605</b>	5.0%
<b>Retail</b>	<b>475</b>	11.5%	<b>19,265</b>	11.2%	<b>237,860</b>	11.0%
<b>Transport &amp; storage (inc. postal)</b>	<b>180</b>	4.4%	<b>6,810</b>	4.0%	<b>69,425</b>	3.2%
<b>Accommodation &amp; food services</b>	<b>240</b>	5.8%	<b>10,290</b>	6.0%	<b>134,920</b>	6.2%
<b>Information &amp; communication</b>	<b>115</b>	2.8%	<b>7,325</b>	4.3%	<b>143,090</b>	6.6%
<b>Finance &amp; insurance</b>	<b>70</b>	1.7%	<b>4,490</b>	2.6%	<b>57,285</b>	2.7%
<b>Property</b>	<b>105</b>	2.5%	<b>5,440</b>	3.2%	<b>77,655</b>	3.6%
<b>Professional, scientific &amp; technical</b>	<b>400</b>	9.7%	<b>19,630</b>	11.4%	<b>309,650</b>	14.3%
<b>Business administration and support services</b>	<b>230</b>	5.6%	<b>10,995</b>	6.4%	<b>154,860</b>	7.2%
<b>Public administration and defence</b>	<b>100</b>	2.4%	<b>2,465</b>	1.4%	<b>20,485</b>	0.9%
<b>Education</b>	<b>120</b>	2.9%	<b>4,740</b>	2.8%	<b>55,760</b>	2.6%
<b>Health</b>	<b>255</b>	6.2%	<b>10,255</b>	6.0%	<b>121,785</b>	5.6%
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services</b>	<b>255</b>	6.2%	<b>10,785</b>	6.3%	<b>153,220</b>	7.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,135</b>	100.0%	<b>171,590</b>	100.0%	<b>2,161,190</b>	100.0%

## Appendix 2. Broadband Survey in Headon-cum-Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council

1

### Headon-cum-Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council

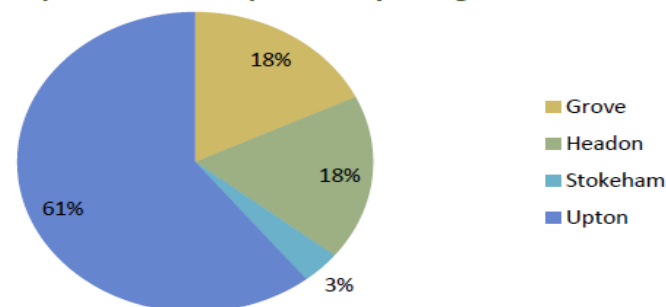
#### Broadband Survey Results – February 2012

For sharing with residents and the Councils following approval at Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

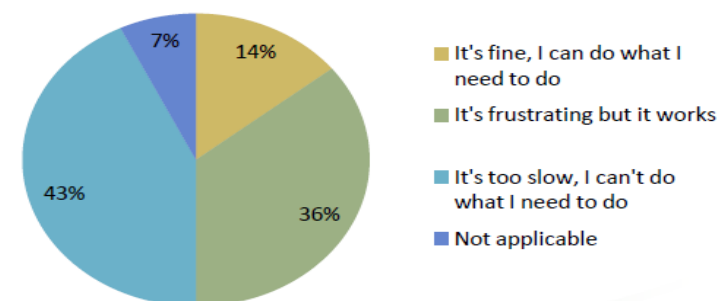
#### Survey Summary

- A total of 78 residents responded (approximately 25% of the population).
- We believe this is not due to apathy or lack of connections as this is higher than most general survey response rates.
- We have therefore assumed that the survey results are representative of the population.
- Upton saw a much higher response rate than the other villages because of more active local promotion of the survey and potentially because it has the lowest of all of the connection speeds.
- Most villagers (79%) are either frustrated with their connection or can't use it in the way they want.

Split of total responses by village



What villagers think of their current broadband





## Headon-cum-Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council

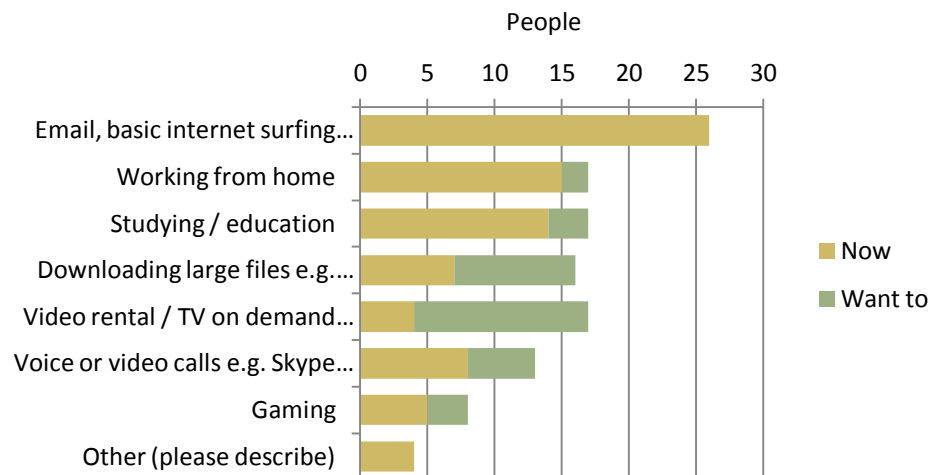
### Broadband Survey Results – February 2012

For sharing with residents and the Councils following approval at Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

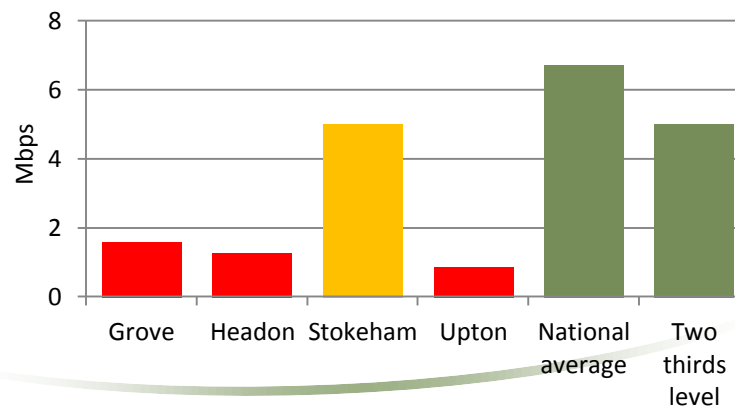
#### Internet usage and speeds

- Villagers' responses clearly showed that the more bandwidth intensive activities such as downloading videos and large files are used by less than half the villagers but more than two thirds want to.
- More than two thirds of the respondents work and study from home using their internet connection. This indicates it is a vital resource to the local economy.
- Generally the villages get around the same speeds. Stokeham only had one response at 5Mbps and this could be an anomaly or collection error.
- We believe Grove is on a different exchange to the other villages and this may explain why it is slightly faster. This would need to be confirmed.
- We are all far, far below the national average and the level that two thirds of the country are at.

#### Broadband use now and desired future usage



#### What are the current speeds?



## Headon-cum-Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council

### Broadband Survey Results – February 2012

For sharing with residents and the Councils following approval at Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

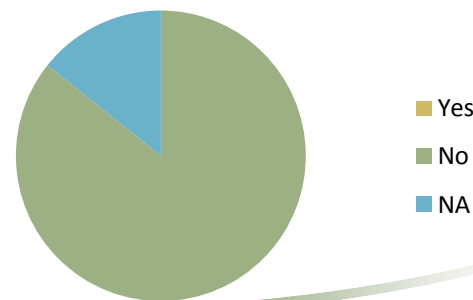
#### How do we feel about the future?

- The villagers spend an average of £16.50 per month on broadband and are willing to spend an average of £23 to get a faster service.
- We estimate the villages cumulatively spend around £2,000 per month for an internet connection and can spend up to £2,800.
- Villagers are unhappy about having to wait a potential of 3-5 years for a broadband upgrade. We have no evidence that it will even be done within that time frame.

#### How much are villagers' willing to pay compared to now?



#### Are villagers happy waiting 3-5 years for a BT roll out?



## Headon-cum-Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council

### Broadband Survey Results – February 2012

For sharing with residents and the Councils following approval at Parish Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

#### What have we done to date?

- The Parish council has written to Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) and had several rounds of correspondence with their broadband team. We have also been in regular contact with the head of Nottinghamshire County Council (Councillor Kay Cutts) (NCC) who has been very vocal in her support for the broadband upgrades.
- We have offered our support for any local initiatives and expressed a deep held desire/need to be involved in any rollout of superfast broadband infrastructure.
- All parties contacted have responded that they recognise that broadband is important. However, there have been some disagreements between the Councils as to who should pay for the programme. We have been told that the recent and heavy cuts to the funding for Councils is at the heart of this.
- We understand that BDC have offered £150k of the £800k requested by NCC. NCC are now exploring options of making up the shortfall from elsewhere. We do not know if this means if the additional funding will be used in other Districts as a result of this. We do not know if our villages will be included in any programme developed by BDC or if the money will only be spent closer to town. We are trying to seek clarification.
- BT have recently announced they will be upgrading Retford's exchange to fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) superfast broadband (fibre optic to the local telephone cabinets, not to the homes). As at 11<sup>th</sup> March 2012, BT say that Grove will not be connected any time soon. This is presumably due to the distance from the exchange and the number of potential customers in the village.
- BT's website shows that the exchanges for Headon and Upton have no scheduled upgrades as this time.

#### What can we do now:

1. We continue to offer our support to the BDC and NCC for this programme. We will also continue to ask to be included in the roll out programme as it appears BT will not be reaching our villages any time soon.
2. We will monitor the situation with BT and update villagers when possible.
3. We will continue to investigate the possibilities of a Community Broadband Programme with a few villagers who have volunteered to conduct an investigation into the options.
4. We will consider options for more public support for broadband connections for smaller villages should the need and opportunity present itself.

## 7. Bibliography

Name	Date	Title	Link
Bassetlaw Insight	2010	Adult Education and Skills	<a href="http://www.bassetlawinsight.org.uk/IAS/profiles/profile?profileId=403#iasProfileSection1">http://www.bassetlawinsight.org.uk/IAS/profiles/profile?profileId=403#iasProfileSection1</a>
Commission for Rural Communities	2009	Mind the Gap: Digital England – a rural perspective	<a href="http://www.samknows.com/broadband/uploads/CRC.pdf">http://www.samknows.com/broadband/uploads/CRC.pdf</a>
Department for Business Innovation & Skills	16/11/2010	National Skills Strategy	<a href="http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2010/Nov/skills-for-sustainable-growth">http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2010/Nov/skills-for-sustainable-growth</a>
Department for Business, Industry and Skills	2010	Britain's Superfast Broadband Future	<a href="http://www.culture.gov.uk/publications/7829.aspx">http://www.culture.gov.uk/publications/7829.aspx</a>
Department for culture media and sport	Mar-12	Local authorities meet broadband deadline	<a href="http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/news_stories/8912.aspx">http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/news_stories/8912.aspx</a>
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs	29/11/2011	Rural Economy Growth Review	<a href="http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/economy/rural-economic-growth-review-111129.pdf">http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/economy/rural-economic-growth-review-111129.pdf</a>
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs	09/12/2011	Consultation on the future of the Commission for Rural Communities	<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/crc/consultation-on-the-future-of-the-crc/">http://www.defra.gov.uk/crc/consultation-on-the-future-of-the-crc/</a>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Link</b>
Department of Work and Pensions	2011	Early Impacts of Work Experience	<a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2012/early_impacts_of_work_experience.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2012/early_impacts_of_work_experience.pdf</a>
Fenland District Council	Oct-09	Access to Services Review 2009	<a href="http://www.fenland.gov.uk/aksfenland/images/att302.pdf">http://www.fenland.gov.uk/aksfenland/images/att302.pdf</a>
IGD		Local Sourcing	<a href="http://www.igd.com/index.asp?id=1&amp;fid=5&amp;sid=23&amp;tid=112&amp;folid=0&amp;cid=551">http://www.igd.com/index.asp?id=1&amp;fid=5&amp;sid=23&amp;tid=112&amp;folid=0&amp;cid=551</a>
Lancashire County Council	2006	FAIR ACCESS TO RURAL SERVICES IN THE NORTHWEST	<a href="http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/ruralpathfinder/evidencebase/es%20for%20rural%20communities%20in%20the%20North%20West.pdf">http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/ruralpathfinder/evidencebase/es%20for%20rural%20communities%20in%20the%20North%20West.pdf</a>
Maidstone Borough Council	2011	Rural Economy	<a href="http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/8A316907-9716-4F01-968E-312A7E4AB80F/FinalDownload/DownloadId-870EE12D8BAFF23DCD042AEEC46CE666/8A316907-9716-4F01-968E-312A7E4AB80F/pdf/L%20P%20Rural%20Economy%20Review.pdf">http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/8A316907-9716-4F01-968E-312A7E4AB80F/FinalDownload/DownloadId-870EE12D8BAFF23DCD042AEEC46CE666/8A316907-9716-4F01-968E-312A7E4AB80F/pdf/L%20P%20Rural%20Economy%20Review.pdf</a>
OFSTED	2012	Apprenticeships for young people	<a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/apprenticeships-for-young-people">http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/apprenticeships-for-young-people</a>

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Rural Business Research			<a href="http://www.fbspartnership.co.uk/">http://www.fbspartnership.co.uk/</a>
Rural Community Action Nottingham.	2012	Raising the Rural Voice	<a href="http://www.rcan.org.uk/projectlist.php?id=8">http://www.rcan.org.uk/projectlist.php?id=8</a>
Rural Network for the East Midlands	2012	Who are We?	<a href="http://www.rnem.org.uk/">http://www.rnem.org.uk/</a>
Rural Services Network	27/01/2012	Minister praises broadband plans	<a href="http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/services/minister-praises-broadband-plans">http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/services/minister-praises-broadband-plans</a>
Rural services Network	2010	Bassetlaw	<a href="http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/performance-profiling/bassetlaw">http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/performance-profiling/bassetlaw</a>
Sheffield City Region LEP		Home Page	<a href="http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/">http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/</a>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Link</b>
Sheffield Work and Skills Board	19-Dec-11	Minutes of the Sheffield City Region LEP Board Meeting held on Monday 19 December 2011	<a href="http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SCR-LEP-Board-minutes-19-12-11.pdf">http://www.sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/SCR-LEP-Board-minutes-19-12-11.pdf</a>
Yorkshire and Humber Assembly	March 2008	Scrutiny Review of the Rural Economy	<a href="http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk/dnlds/Scrutiny%2012%20-%20Rural.pdf">http://www.yhassembly.gov.uk/dnlds/Scrutiny%2012%20-%20Rural.pdf</a>
	2012	No Train No Gain	<a href="http://www.ippr.org/images/media/files/publication/2012/04/no-train-no-gain_Apr2012_8858.pdf">http://www.ippr.org/images/media/files/publication/2012/04/no-train-no-gain_Apr2012_8858.pdf</a>







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