

## **ECONOMY**

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Paper outlines the current situation regarding the local economy in Botley.
- 1.2 Over the period of the Botley Neighbourhood Plan the local economy needs to prosper and, where possible, expand by attracting new businesses. A thriving local economy benefits the whole community.
- 1.3 Most of the working population of the Parish are employed at sites outside the Parish and the potential for local employment is limited and so supporting this is of great significance.
- 1.4 Recent and further planned housing development will more than double the population of Botley Parish and it is expected that this will not only support current businesses but bring new businesses to the Parish.
- 1.5 Once the Botley Bypass is completed, hopefully some time in 2022, changes to traffic flow through the Village centre together with improved car parking should have a beneficial impact on the retail and hospitality businesses clustered here.
- 1.6 Currently with reduced parking in the Village centre there is limited opportunity for passing trade. When the Botley Bypass is opened every effort will need to be made to attract visitors into and the Village centre. There is already a trend to more specialist shops and hospitality outlets in the Village centre and these types of business are more likely to thrive if Botley becomes an appealing destination - a Destination Village.

## **2 The current local economy - opportunities and challenges**

- 2.1 In Botley Parish there are a variety of business and retail enterprises. The Eastleigh Borough Council Business Directory lists 107 businesses as being based within Botley Parish. The Botley Business Directory has recently been updated and this can be accessed using the link shown below.

<https://www.botley.com/business-directory>

- 2.2 Botley has a rich and diverse range of business, commercial and retail premises. Local residents and the Parish Council wish to see this range and diversity continue and to expand in the future. Shopping opportunities include two food shops plus a wide range of retail premises in Botley Village Centre and at the

Botley Mills. A range of horticulture, pet and shopping opportunities are found at a local Garden Centre in Woodhouse Lane. Leisure and visitor attractions are found at the River Hamble Country Park that includes Manor Farm, a hotel and spa, four public houses, two micro-breweries with one having a public retail outlet and at least eleven eateries offering food and refreshments. Travel needs are supported by a garage, car sales sites, vehicle repairs and tyre sales. Nail parlours, hairdressers, two cycle shops, an estate agent, printers and office supplies plus two Dental Practices and the Botley Surgery are available to meet the needs of the local community. Other services on offer include garden work, plumbing, pet care, horse riding, clay pigeon shooting and boating activities. This summary covers many but not all the retail, business and commercial activities to be found within the Parish of Botley.

- 2.3 There are employment opportunities spread across the Parish. The key employment area is in the Village centre, with about twenty businesses in the Square and about forty on the Botley Mills site. Smaller employment sites are on Broad Oak (Richmond Motor Group, Broadway Farm site, the Cooperative garage), Marls Road (Hammerton Garage), Woodhouse Lane (the Waste Management Service and the Hillier's site), various small industrial units and leisure facilities in Boorley Green and the Manor Farm Country Park.
- 2.4 The Coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on the current economic stability of many businesses in Botley and is likely to influence the future economic development and opportunities within the Parish. Local businesses will need to be innovative and to diversify in the supply of goods and services. A likely increased need to trade online, particularly around shopping from home, will require fast, reliable high-speed digital connectivity.
- 2.5 A high proportion of Botley Parish residents travel to a place of employment beyond the Parish boundary. An efficient transport infra-structure is vital to all residents and particularly to those moving out or back into the Parish during rush-hour periods.
- 2.6 An integral part of an efficient local transport infrastructure will be improved car parking at Botley Railway Station and better pedestrian and bicycle access from both Botley and Curdrige to the Station.
- 2.7 One likely impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will be a longer-term increase in the number of residents working from home, which will require fast, reliable high-speed digital connectivity.

- 2.8 The level of rural diversification within the Parish, particularly farming, is under constant threat from new development. Where it still exists, such as on Botley Manor Farm and alongside Brook Lane, it should be protected and preserved.
- 2.9 There are a considerable number of green spaces providing temporary dwellings and grazing areas for their animals, particularly horses. It is important these properties comply with both local and national planning regulations whilst not contravening land usage agreements.

### **3 Potential expansion of the local economy - opportunities and challenges**

- 3.1 Provision of local shops within walking distance of large developments, for example Boorley Park and Boorley Gardens, will be of benefit to those living locally and reduce traffic movements. Also, local shops will provide opportunities for social interaction and help to limit social isolation within large developments. Retail premises will provide local employment opportunities as will the new Boorley Park Community facilities.
- 3.2 Following the opening of the Botley Bypass there should be an opportunity to redesign the Village centre so that it becomes an attractive destination for shoppers and those visiting the hospitality providers. There will be a need to maximise parking spaces within the Village Centre in close proximity to retail facilities. The footpath on Mill Hill could also be realigned to provide safer and better access between Botley Village Square and Botley Mill.
- 3.3 With Botley Bypass completed visitors will need to be attracted into the Village centre. Attractive signage at the Maypole and Kings Corner Junctions should be used to highlight Botley as a retail, leisure and historic destination that welcomes visitors.
- 3.4 It will be important once the Botley Bypass is completed that there is good access from around Botley railway station and beyond into Curdridge Parish. Access must include walkways and cycle ways.
- 3.5 At present there are few business premises sited in West Botley or Boorley Green. Where possible those sites that do exist such as the garage off Kings Copse Avenue and the business units on SHLAA-3-23-C should have their present terms of use retained.

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- 3.6 Opportunities could be taken to build small estates of business units away from the Village centre in new development areas or even brown field sites using developer contributions. This would provide employment for local residents.
- 3.7 Much business activity takes place on specific sites within Botley Parish such as the Maypole Roundabout, Hillier's Garden Centre, the Macdonald Hotel, the Botley Mills and Botley Village Centre. At some time in the future the potential and available space for these premises to respond to increased demand both locally and beyond will need to be assessed.
- 3.8 The regeneration of the Botley Traders Association is serving to promote the Village and provide information to visitors. Traders will support each other and promote commerce. Feedback from the Botley Traders Association could contribute to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.9 When developments have a commercial or industrial component it is essential that these units are delivered by the developers and not just conveniently forgotten by both the developer and Eastleigh Borough Council.

## 4 Aims

- a Encourage the expansion and diversity of the economic endeavour that already exists within Botley Parish. Local economic endeavour includes retail, tourism, leisure, hospitality, education, rural diversification and light industry.
- b Encourage better movement links by improvements to the current local bus services, pedestrian and cycle links to both the Village and Botley Railway Station and improved parking at the Station to provide improved access to retail and business premises both within and without Botley.
- c Fast, reliable high-speed digital connectivity is essential as the number of residents working from home rises and for businesses as they become increasingly reliant on web based marketing. The current broadband infrastructure needs further improvement and digital connectivity to the door should be required as part of all new planning applications for both residential and commercial properties.
- d Encourage Eastleigh Borough Council to require developers to deliver commercial or industrial units agreed as part of a development.
- e Encourage a supply of affordable homes, including one or two-bedroom homes, social rent and shared ownership opportunities, for young people and their families which will allow them to participate in local economic endeavour, work from home or set up their own small business.

- f Encourage vocational training opportunities, for all age groups within the Parish, in conjunction with local colleges, schools and training centres. Work sites and day visit tasters could be coordinated with local businesses.
- g Seek to improve the sustainability of Botley Village once the Botley Bypass is completed by remodelling Botley Square, by attractive use of signage and by providing easy access from all directions including to the north of Kings Corner.

## 5 Information and reference sources

5.1 Information used to develop this Paper was obtained from a variety of sources but the most important of these was:

- a Hampshire Chamber of Trade;
- b The Botley Business Directory;  
<https://www.botley.com/business-directory>
- c The Botley Traders;
- d Eastleigh Borough Business Directory;  
<https://www.eastleighborough.co.uk/>
- e Eastleigh Local Economy;  
<https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/3391/eastleigh-economy-review-jan-2017.pdf>
- f Eastleigh Borough Council Senior Economic Development Officer;
- g Hedge End, West End & Botley Local Area Committee;
- h Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2036; and  
<https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/1606/emerging-eastleigh-local-plan-2011-2036.pdf>
- i Eastleigh Borough Council Corporate Plan 2015-2025.  
<https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/2349/corporate-plan-2015-2025.pdf>

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