

Thurston Business Questionnaire



Have your say!

Thurston has been identified by Mid Suffolk as a key village for growth and this will bring change.

Why do we need a questionnaire?

The Neighbourhood Plan Team, following an initial survey and a Village Forum needs to continue to gather as much data as possible to ensure that all residents and businesses have the opportunity to express their views and needs on future development within Thurston.

This is your opportunity, as a business within Thurston, to identify areas for improving your community and promoting economic growth and employment opportunities.

The information collected from this questionnaire will be used to prepare the Thurston Neighbourhood Plan which, if passed by referendum, will become part of planning policy and the Mid Suffolk Local Development Framework (LDF).

For more information please visit:

<http://thurston.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/neighbourhood-plan/>

PLEASE HELP US by filling in this questionnaire online, or by using this paper form.

IF FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ONLINE

Go to the following address: <http://qa.1sixty.net/qa> and a screen will come up asking you to enter your code from the top left hand side of this page. The top header will detail the name of the section of the questionnaire. Complete the questionnaire by following the on-screen instructions.

HOW TO FILL IN THIS PAPER QUESTIONNAIRE

Please PRINT your comments. Please mark the box like this ☐ with a ball point pen. When completed please use the drop off boxes situated either at the Post Office; Petrol Station; the Butchers; Community Library; Fox and Hounds or the Parish Council Office.

If you have any questions or need help in filling out this questionnaire please contact Vicky, the Parish Clerk, on 01359 232854 (Tuesdays and Fridays) or via email: thurstonnpsg@hotmail.com or alternatively please come along to the drop-in sessions at the Parish Council Office between 10.00am and 8.00pm on Tuesday 4th, Friday 7th and Tuesday 11th November.

**Please complete and return all questionnaires by
14th November**

Q1) Is your business located in?

Please select one or more of the following

1 Domestic premises	<input type="text" value="4"/>
2 Own premises	<input type="text" value="9"/>
3 On an industrial estate	<input type="text" value="2"/>
4 On an agricultural holding	<input type="text" value="2"/>
5 Thurston	<input type="text" value="7"/>
6 Neighbouring Parish	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Q2) Into which category does your business fall?

Please select one answer only

1 Agriculture/Horticulture	<input type="text" value="1"/>
2 Food Processing	<input type="text" value="1"/>
3 Retail	<input type="text" value="3"/>
4 Construction	<input type="text" value="5"/>
5 Finance/Professional Services	<input type="text" value="1"/>
6 Restaurants & Cafes	<input type="text" value="1"/>
7 Transport	<input type="text" value="1"/>
8 Tourism eg. hotels, B & B, camping	<input type="text" value="0"/>
9 Health and Beauty	<input type="text" value="2"/>
10 Garage Services	<input type="text" value="1"/>
11 Childcare	<input type="text" value="0"/>
12 Other Service	<input type="text" value="1"/>

Q3) How many people do you employ?

Please insert the number for each of the following:

1 Sub-contract	<input type="text" value="8"/>
2 Seasonal	<input type="text" value="5"/>
3 Permanent	<input type="text" value="17"/>
4 Temporary	<input type="text" value="5"/>

Q4) How long has the business been operating in Thurston?

Please insert the number of years:	0 – 5 years	– 30%
	5 – 10 years	– 6%
	10+ years	- 64%

Q5) How many of these employees do you understand to live in Thurston?

Please insert the number for each of the following:

1 Sub-contract	5	
2 Seasonal	4	
3 Permanent	14	
4 Temporary	3	

Q6) How do you and your employees usually travel to work?

Please select one or more of the following:

1 Drive a Car/Motorbike/Scooter/Moped	13
2 Passenger in/on one of the above	1
3 Drive a Van/Lorry	3
4 Passenger in a Van/Lorry	1
5 Public transport	0
6 Bicycle	4
7 Walk	6

Q7) If you needed to expand the size of your business premises, would you be able to do that in Thurston?

Please select one answer only:

1 Yes	10	
2 No	5	

Q8) If no, what is the major barrier to expansion in Thurston?

Please enter your answer

Site has ample opportunity for expansion which could offer increased employment and training. Limited to size at home premises. With planning permission our current site would offer development of business and starter units for occupation for our and other businesses, local to or far away. Adjacent land belongs to another owner so no chance of expansion. Very little chance to enlarge site in present position and nothing available in similar position. Listed Building. Planning conditions

Q9) Do you feel that there is a shortage of suitable business premises in Thurston?

Please select one answer only:

1 Yes

8

2 No

7

Q10) If you feel there is a shortage of suitable premises, does the shortage relate to?

Please select one or more of the following:

1 Office space

3

2 Storage space

2

3 Light assembly/small Workshops

6

4 Small factory units

5

5 Start-up units

5

6 Parking areas

2

7 Other (please specify)

Not enough retail units; no meeting rooms;
retail developments

Q11) What size of small commercial workspace units do you think might be suitable over the next 15 years?

Please select one or more of the following:

1 10 - 20 square metres

6

2 20 - 40 square metres

10

3 Over 40 square metres

4

Q12) Do you expect to create job opportunities in the next 5 years?

Please select one answer only:

1 Yes

9

2 No

8

Q13) Do you have a shortage of skilled employees?

Please select one answer only

1 Yes

4

2 No

12

Q14) If Yes, what skill requirements is your business short of?

Please enter your answer

Construction professionals; skilled construction readers; graduate and trainee candidates.
 Our business has the potential to continuously train local apprentices and graduates and has an established record of doing so.
 Administrative, skilled trade, skilled technician, graduate.
 Skilled technicians.
 Difficult to recruit apprentices due to our position on the outskirts of Thurston.

Q15) Do you offer apprenticeships or work experience?

Please select one answer only

1 Yes

11

2 No

6

Q16) Would the following be useful to you or your employees?

Please select one or more of the following:

1 Home Workers Luncheon Club

0

2 Informal meetings with other Home Workers

0

3 Information on small business support systems

6

4 Information on training schemes

5

5 Local Jobs Vacancy Notice Board

6

6 Compilation of a Village Skills Register

3

7 A Meeting Room

1

8 Business Forum

3

9 Other – please specify

Training – career opportunity links with local schools/sixth form.
 Local government be engaged within community and invite and visit businesses.

Q17) Are you aware that there is an Economic Development Officer at your District and County Council who can signpost you to business services and grants? If you would you like further details, please enter your contact details below:

Yes – 4

no - 2

Q18) How might your business best communicate with local people about the goods and services you offer and any job opportunities over the next 15 years?

Please select one or more of the following:

1 Village Website

12

2 Notice Boards

9

- 3 Village Newsletter
- 4 Social Networking / Forums
- 5 Consultation via Parish Council
- 6 No additional communication is required
- 7 Other - please specify

11

6

2

1

Business liaison group feeding into schools and college. Support community. Careers advice at school

Q19) Would you be interested in publicity space in the following in the future?

Please select one or more of the following:

- 1 Village Newsletter
- 2 Village Website - Business Section
- 3 Village Noticeboards
- 4 Thurston Library
- 5 Community Centres
- 6 Other (Please specify)

9

7

6

6

5

0

Q20) How do you rate the following infrastructure services?

Please tick relevant box for each answer	Needs Improving 1	2	3	Excellent 4	No opinion 5
Mains Water Supply	2	2	4	4	4
Mains Gas Supply	2	1	4	2	5
Mains Electricity	4	1	4	6	2
Sewage	2	2	4	4	2
Refuse Collection	0	5	9	1	2
Street Lighting	3	4	5	2	2
Roadside Care Clearing of grips/drains/culverts etc	2	2	10	2	0
Street Cleaning	0	4	11	1	1
Mobile Phone Coverage	5	3	5	3	1
Telephone Landline Coverage	1	2	8	4	2

Q21) What do like least about running a business in Thurston?

Lack of development, no premises to expand.
Not the fastest broadband or mobile coverage – but it is improving.
There are 1400 houses in Thurston but on a Saturday approx. only 70 customers.
Access roads are poorly maintained with overhanging/projecting trees and hedges, serious potholes to edges of roads.
Overhead electric supply is exposed to high winds/bad weather.
Very low broadband speed on internet.
Hedge and verge condition.
Parking problems – no provision for parking when shops and business wish to expand.
Too much government interference in every day matters ie health and safety.
Parish Council interfering with view for the future of the village.
Lack of brown signs for businesses.
Empty land close to primary school underused and could be developed for expansion of primary school.

Q22) What do you like best about running a business in Thurston.

The local people. Easy access to main roads A14/A11. Good rail connections. Pool of part time labour at Thurston Community College. Relatively crime-free area. Part of an enlightened District that encourages entrepreneurship. Thriving village. Reasonable local facilities. Easy access to A14. Nearby rail links. Community facilities are good. We can assist local area through employment, training, local purchase of services. Reasonable safe area re vandalism and theft. Serving the local community. Local facilities – Post Office, fuel, pub, access to towns, A14, Norfolk, rateable value. Play group and child care. Village location is more relaxing than town. Interaction with local residents. Services – buses and trains. Good location and good connections for transport – railway station and bus stops all nearby. Cheaper not so many overheads. Customer satisfaction when it is appreciated. Rural location. Good road links. Regular contact with villagers and other local people when they visit our business. Being part of the community.

Q23) Please add any further comments you have about the future for businesses in Thurston over the next 15 years.

A designated area for small businesses with a variety of shops. Thurston with the future expansion planned as a minor centre is an excellent base from which to operate from with excellent access to the rest of East Anglia and the county. It will also keep it's rural feel with nowhere further than 5 minutes from open countryside. Only 5 minutes from the thriving market town of Bury St Edmunds. Infrastructure, power, roads, broadband need further investment. A multiple use Public building housing medical, Community Police could raise profile of village. Heavier industry at Station Hill, resiting to allow fit for purpose development within Thurston with industry siting on outskirts would enhance village. With its educational, community, entertainment, sporting, rail station and services, Thurston has the opportunity to expand but needs more industry, business development to avoid stagnation. There is a definite need for small business units. Need for start-up units, trade site to allow cottage industries to stay within the village. Caution that the village does not become dormitory only. No space in centre of village for further expansion as housing. A complete overhaul of the chaotic rating system is long overdue on business rates. Planning laws need to be reviewed to allow for sensible expansion