

### Employment in Congresbury

The initial consultation showed that a significant proportion of residents wished to see greater opportunities for employment within the village and the development of business sites to encourage the growth of small businesses. However, it was not clear from this consultation how many local employment opportunities were available within the village. It was decided to conduct a short telephone survey of businesses in Congresbury to assess the situation.

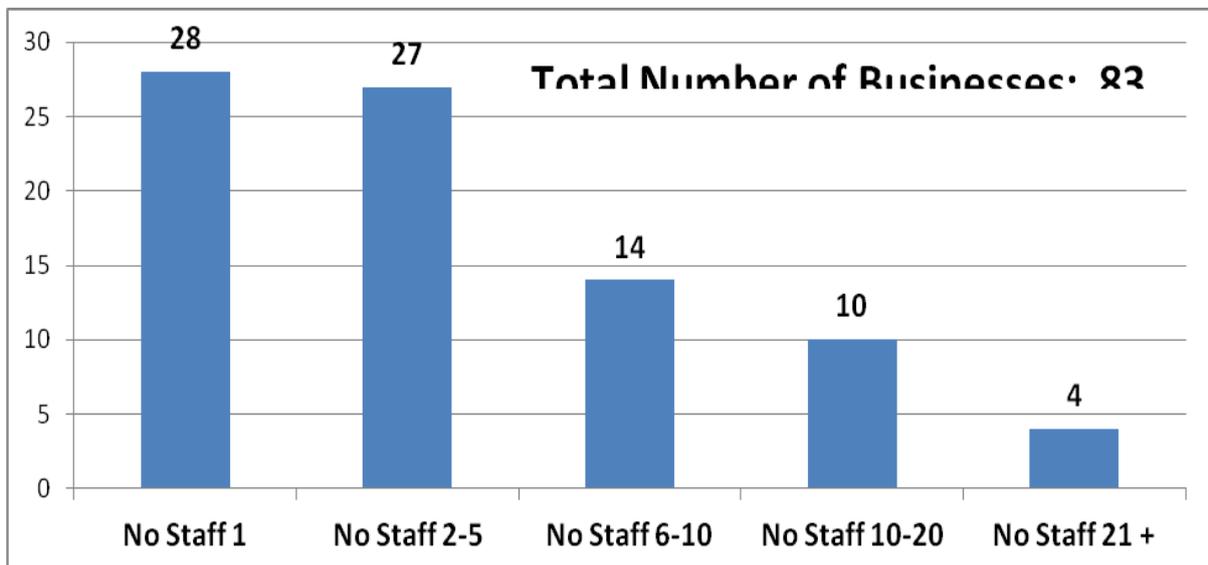
### Telephone Survey

The survey covered 83 businesses operating in or around Congresbury and was carried out in July and August of 2016. Since that date a number of these businesses may have ceased trading whilst some new enterprises have started operating, although there is no reason to expect that these are dissimilar in size and profile to those surveyed.

During the survey businesses were asked how many employees they had, the age bands they fell into, whether they were full or part time and whether their employees lived in the village, the local area or further afield. Additional questions sought information on expansion plans, barriers to expansion and whether specific skills requirements meant that recruitment needed to be from outside the locality.

### Characteristics of Enterprises

Businesses in Congresbury are almost entirely within the Service Sector with the largest sub sectors being retail and hospitality. With the exception of 4 enterprises all the businesses contacted had less than 20 members of staff with a majority of them having between 2 and 5 employees.



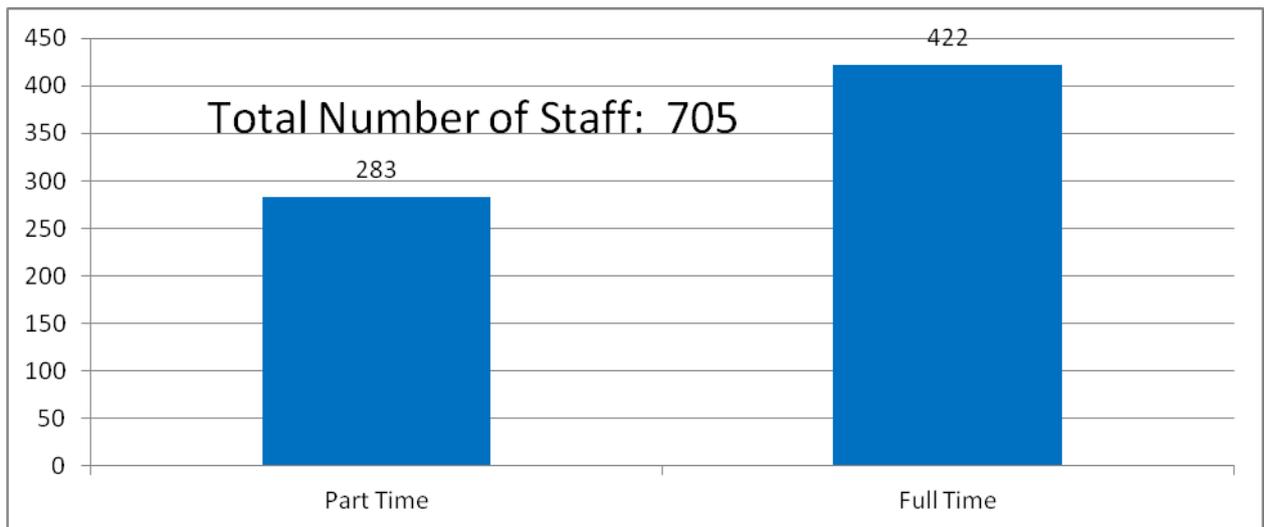
There is some clustering of enterprises along the A370 and on the B3133, on the Yatton road and on the road to Churchill as well as within the village centre.

Wyevale’s Garden and Shopping Centre with its satellite businesses is by far the biggest employer in the Parish.

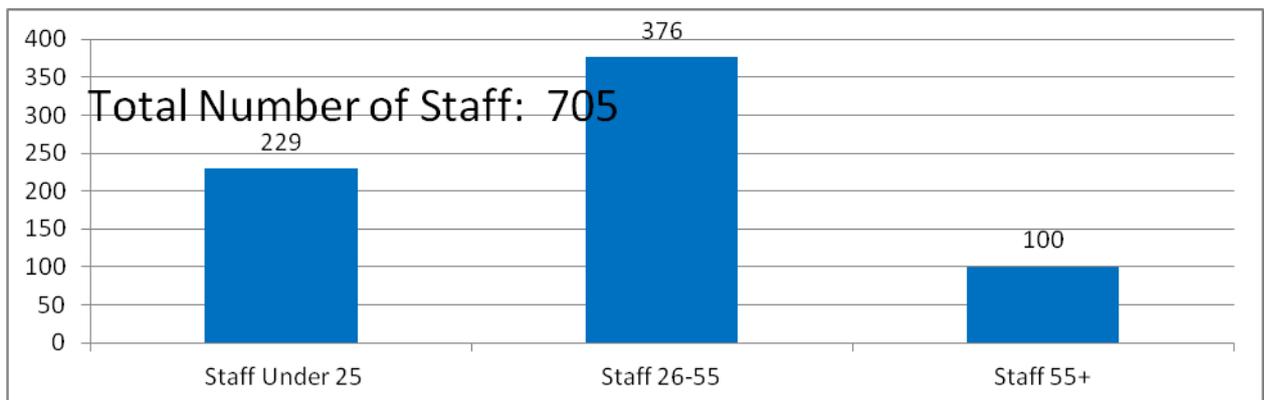
There are a number of sole traders working from their homes, a significant proportion of who are in the later stages of their careers and intend to retire within the next 2 to 3 years.

### Employment Patterns

The majority of the 700+ jobs identified in the survey (422) are full time but there are a very significant number of part time jobs (283) many of which appeared to be short term and casual.

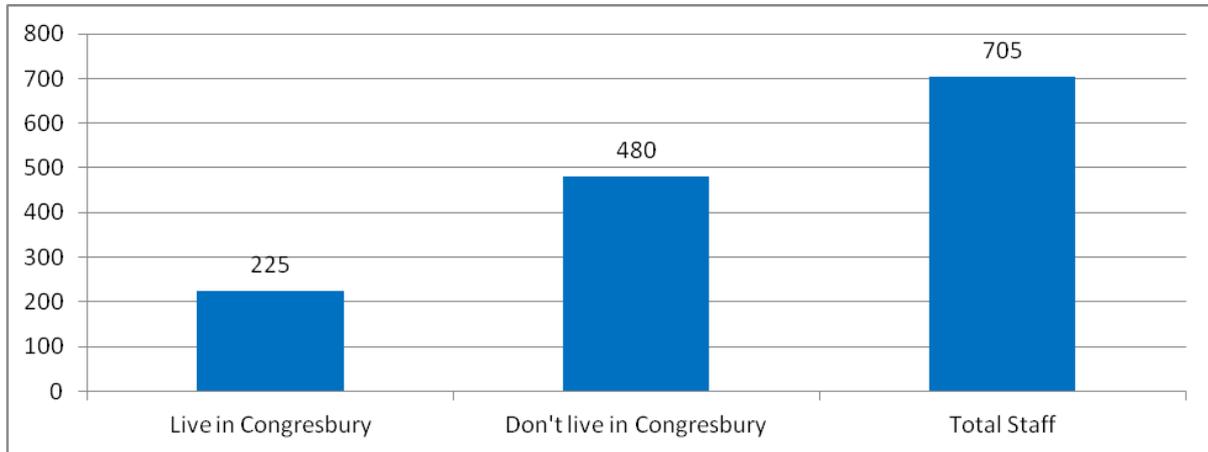


Most employees are aged between 26 and 55, 376 in total, but 100 over 55 years are employed and 229 people aged 25 and under. Discussion with the businesses indicated that this age group tended to be over represented in part time jobs.



Although under a third of those employed live within the village almost all employees are recruited from the local catchment area and only very rarely does an employer need to seek workers from further afield. Jobs are mainly advertised locally or by word of mouth.

Employment within the village is available to those living in Congresbury even if the number of jobs is limited.



### Expansion and Growth of Employment Opportunities

Of those businesses willing to discuss expansion plans only 23 wished to expand. The rest were satisfied with the current size of their enterprises, which met the needs of the owners.

For those who did wish to expand the main barriers to expansion were outside the scope of the Development Plan as they related to the economic climate and trading conditions.

However, a number of businesses identified issues related to operating in the village that they felt made trading more difficult;

- Issues with traffic and car parking caused problems to some, particularly retail outlets within the village itself. Commuters rather than customers were using the limited numbers of parking spaces available. They would like to see the introduction of timed parking restrictions.
- Slow broadband speed and poor mobile signal hampered their online services.

For those businesses wishing to expand there was no indication that premises of a type other than those already being encouraged i.e. small industrial units were required.

### Policy Recommendations

- **Planning permission for premises to be converted from business to residential use will not be granted without demonstrable evidence that the current use, or other business use is not viable.**
- **Subject to acceptable impact on nearby residential areas minor development to facilitate home working will be permitted.**