

## 9 Employment & Enterprise

# 9. Employment and Enterprise

### Employment Growth

1. Economic and enterprise development for employment growth was identified by the Barnham & Eastergate Residents Survey as a Key issue of concern.
  
2. **Barnham & Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan objectives for enterprise and employment are to:**
  - To establish a vibrant, dynamic, resourceful, enterprising and ambitious Economic Base looking both inward and outward for opportunities and trade.
  
  - To establish an enterprising business community that works together in mutual support, with pride, respect and commitment to the local area.
  
  - To establish an enterprising business community that believes in ethical values and high standards and which is committed to quality, excellent service and exemplary customer care.
  
  - To create a Local Neighbourhood that is not only a desirable place to live but also offers a business environment that supports the birth and incubation of new enterprise and nurtures the growth and expansion of commerce.
  
3. The policies on employment in the Neighbourhood Plan build upon our research relating to the local employment landscape, by this we considered factors such as demographics, the local skill set, local prosperity, current economic activity, work spaces and local advantage (why enterprise is here). We also looked at the “bigger picture”, first by looking back to the recent past and the damage and uncertainty caused by the economic collapse of 2008, because we consider that this event will be the overriding influence on the economy for at least a decade. Then we turned our attention to current employment trends to see what is happening in the world of employment & enterprise now. Not forgetting that we are just one locality out of many Parishes that comprise the Arun District we made sure, as far as our local

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4. mandate would allow, to support and augment ADC's strategies and policy initiatives. Being conscious of our scale (a dot on a map) also made us acutely aware of the need to be realistic with our strategic plan aspirations, to fit in with our neighbours (near & far) and to be sensible about how as a Parish we can support our Policies. On the latter point we have devised guiding principles and defined specific initiatives to this end.
  
5. Barnham & Eastergate Employment & Enterprise research and critiques identified three localised strategic objectives and an ADC affiliated strategic objective. They are to:
  - Encourage employability for our young population and extended employability for our older population;
  - Encourage an increase in enterprise startups and survival rates – focusing on small businesses.
  - Encourage, improve and facilitate commercial activities and initiatives that result in a vibrant, active and well publicised enterprising community– focusing on building the relationship between businesses, (B2B), Business and their customers (B2C) and business and their communities (or environment).
  - Support ADC's strategic objectives of:
    - Improve education, skills and employability of the local population;
    - Increase business competitiveness and growth – focusing on existing businesses;
    - Encourage the level and rate of new investment, particularly in high growth sectors – focusing on new enterprises and inward investment;
    - Maintain and improve business infrastructure;
    - Maintain and improve the area's infrastructure, facilities and physical environment; and
    - Maintain and improve transport networks across the district and wider area.
  
6. There is no observable conflict of interest between B&E NP objectives and these of ADC's and we hope to gain a synergy

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of initiatives and results that will contribute towards achieving our Vision.

### Enterprise & Strategic Employment

7. Barnham & Eastergate's local economic activity is varied and includes many features that could be best described as a micro-economy of the District (with its distinctive enterprise and demographic characteristics). Datum statistics for the parishes includes:
  - A working age group of residents of circa 3,500 people, of whom over 470 (13%) are self employed;
  - An employment rate of 97% amongst the economically active working age group of circa 2,500 people. About 81% of people commute outside the Parishes to their place of work. (ONS 1/13 & ACRE 7/13)
8. Typical current active sectors include:
  - Agriculture & Horticulture including related services;
  - Knowledge-based economic activities;
  - Tourism;
  - Education, Health and Social care;
  - Retail & retail services.
9. The term 'knowledge-based economy' (or knowledge economy) is widely used to describe the shift in the nature of economic activity and the process of wealth generation in advanced countries. The generation, accumulation and exploitation of knowledge are now central to economic growth and competitiveness. The knowledge economy is derived from knowledge driven production sectors which can be defined as: aerospace, electric machinery and optical equipment, printing, publishing and recorded media, chemicals and energy; and knowledge driven services which include telecoms, computer and related services, finance, business services, air transport services and recreational and cultural services.
10. **Barnham & Eastergate recognise the knowledge economy, particularly, but not exclusively, the service driven elements and cite its development as key to the growth and competitiveness of our local economy. This has important implications, particularly in the areas of education and skills, innovation and creativity and adoption of technology. (See retail in our village centre).**

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### Strategic Employment Land Allocations – Arun’s Policy SP3

Traditionally Arun DC has been at the forefront of working with various partners to help ensure the competitiveness of the district and secure employment growth. Both Arun’s membership of The Coast 2 Capital Local Enterprise Area Partnership and the Coastal West Sussex Partnership have been principal in its Key Issues identification (concerns)\* and its adopted strategy of Place Based economic development and regeneration activity. \* *its Economic Strategy Open for Business*.

1. Consequently Arun’s Strategic Employment Land Allocations – Policy SP3 identifies the three locations of; i) the Bognor Regis Enterprise Zone, ii) The greater Littlehampton area of Courtwick & N Littlehampton, and iii) The Angmering Water Lane area as the prime focus “places” for economic development & regeneration in Arun’s Local Plan. Upon compliance with this policy Arun DC will support and in some cases advance applications (with Local Development Orders [LDO’S]) to invest in employment land in these areas.
2. **Barnham & Eastergate’s close proximity and accessibility, (particularly by public transport), to all three places extends, to its working population, the chance to pursue employment opportunities should they arise therefore in principle it is supported.**
3. Arun’s Economic Strategy identifies four major sectors for future development and employment growth, they are: Horticulture, Knowledge-based manufacturing, Tourism; and Health and social care. And several minor sectors such as Entertainment, the Performing Arts and Tourism. The Arun Local Plan will nurture this growth both directly (land allocation) and indirectly via promoting regeneration and social infrastructure and facilitating transport and ICT infrastructure improvements.
4. **Barnham & Eastergate has identified the significance of the aforementioned sectors within its local economy and will support any suitable initiative that complies with the overall vision of the Parish and its population. Schemes that promote our village centre regeneration will have preferential support.**

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### Other Employment Land Allocations - Arun's Policy SP4

5. Arun's Local Plan commits to ensuring that there is sufficient and accessible business floor space of sustainable quality to meet employment needs in Arun. This not only includes current sites and premises under the traditional umbrella of Business Class B1-B8 (industrial, office & storage/warehousing) but any current location that supports the great diversity of business activities that are now undertaken by enterprises of all sizes. Also included in this commitment is future potential regeneration sites with employment opportunities. Arun will require a compliance with appropriate policies and a balance between need, scale, locality (urban or rural) and impact on local amenity when assessing support for any nominated additional site. However generally all Land allocations will be afforded protection as much as possible.
6. **Barnham and Eastergate does not agree with the Arun assertion within SP4 that "The provision of new high quality employment sites (need to be) in conjunction with strategic housing development;" and concludes that this provision is a contradiction of all the other SP4 policy provisions & criteria.**
7. **Barnham and Eastergate have set out a strategic objective to facilitate and promote new business start up and survival. It also wants to encourage stronger bonds between enterprise and the community. To meet this it is advocating an integrative approach to employment land & sites. A start up business will spare no expense to make sure that it operates as economically as possible. Operating location is one such cost driver. Therefore the concept of home/work units is supported and should be incorporated into planning and development policy. A further imperative for enterprises especially those that need to serve their communities well (their customers) is for formal Work space provision within residential areas. Also many trades can and are now mobile and work vehicles similarly require provision for safe keeping and the avoidance of inconsiderate parking.**

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### 4. Enhancement of Employment Premises and Sites - Arun Policy DM1

- 4.1. For Arun, protecting and enhancing existing employment sites and ensuring that business infrastructure is fit for purpose for this modern changing world is critical. Arun has developed a working Action Plan to achieve this. It will work with all stakeholders on positive interventions, including operational issues, to modernise and enhance employment sites and premises to advance economic and regeneration strategies and support planning policy to prevent the loss of accessible and viable employment sites to other uses such as housing and retail. This has happened in recent years and accentuated the imbalance between housing and employment provision in the local area.
- 4.2. Some communities, with identified housing need, face considerable pressures from applicants and site owners for a change of use when such changes may be considered as inappropriate and possibly detrimental to the economic vitality of that community. Sites may be deliberately downgraded prior to an application for change. So Arun now requires a submission of a full marketing and viability assessment including enhancement and modernisation options before any change of use away from employment is considered.
- 4.3. Arun will encourage locally based firms to relocate (within Arun) for growth or sustainability reasons and will promote regeneration and renewal options for the immediate vacant site and its surroundings if this assists the viability of their relocation. Office developments will be steered towards the town centres and all new employment sites will be required to provision for the full range of users from SMEs to starter home/work units.
- 4.4. **Barnham and Eastergate consider locally based employment as one essential element in maintaining the cohesiveness of its community. Sink villages and commuter villages, where mainly housing is present can not only be sole less places but suffer from a lack of wealth generating activities as the population not only habitually commutes away to work but also to spend. A**

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**similar imbalance now threatens Barnham and Eastergate as recent allowed housing applications have resulted in the loss of many acres of employment sites and employer use land and the potential loss of wealth and employment generating activities in the future. Therefore Barnham and Eastergate support Arun Policy DM1 with particular reference to enhancement, renewal and protection and the remodeling of sites to include mixed use and home/work units as it underpins strategic objectives.**

### 6. Economic Improvement and Skills – Arun Policy DM3

- 6.1. In accordance with Arun's strategy of Place Based economic development and regeneration activity and in addition to its Strategic Employment Land Allocations Policy for Littlehampton and Bognor Regis it has specified two Economic Growth Areas (EGA) within the two towns for prioritised treatment, with a special emphasis on skills development, employment creation, regeneration, cultural, leisure, retail and office development. However it will support development of a similar nature, to an appropriate scale, in other settlements in the district to encourage diversity and enhancement of knowledge and cultural based opportunities.
- 6.2. **Barnham and Eastergate understands that less advantaged areas require support but that ultimately overall economic prosperity and employment growth is conditional on progress being made everywhere. We are not only aware of the dangers of spatially targeted growth but also the competition for growth from the surrounding areas. We are therefore in support of DM3 and have tailored our strategic objective to our local needs, strengths and opportunities.**

### 8. Telecommunications – Arun Policy SP5

- 8.1. In line with Central Government, Arun is committed to providing the highest broadband speeds possible across the district to attract businesses, to promote economic growth and to improve access to goods and services, and opportunities to work from home. All proposals for new residential, employment and commercial development of one unit or more must be designed to be connected to high quality communications infrastructure to ensure that fibre

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optic or other cabling does not need to be retrofitted. Where there is a prerequisite for communications infrastructure there will be a presumption in favour of their development.

- 8.2. High speed Internet connectivity is universally acknowledged as essential therefore Barnham and Eastergate fully support this policy.**

### 9. Economic Development Outside the Built Up Area Boundary Arun Policy DM5

- 9.1. The majority of Arun's Employment & Enterprise Policy deals with land allocation either within the built up area or specified zones. Policy DM5 looks at planning permissions outside the built up area boundary and is only open to firms currently located within the district. A rigorous set of criteria have been set before permission will be allowed, not least that of "no acceptable alternative" but also of sustainability, standard of design, layout and finish and conduciveness to the surrounding environment and amenity. A further sanction of a legal agreement or planning condition may apply.**

### Conversion of Rural Buildings outside of the Built Up Area for Industrial or Business Use, new agricultural buildings & Farm Shops

- 9.2. As above Arun's Planning Policy accommodates such applications, each with a set a rigorous criteria to meet and there may also be strings attached.**
- 9.3. Barnham and Eastergate have great concern for its surrounding rural countryside. The real value in terms of being an economic asset and public amenity far exceeds the material value it is often afforded and needs to be protected. Some business activities, rather than diminish the value of this asset can enhance and add value to it. Such development is supported provided that all criteria is met and enforced.**