

Eynsham Parish Plan 2007-08

52 EMPLOYMENT

52.1 The Facts

52.1.1 Eynsham offers a wide range of facilities and employment to residents and to the surrounding villages. The traditional village centre is complemented by small industrial estates on the outskirts, including a number of high-tech companies – Siemens Magnet Technology employed around 650 people here at the end of 2006.



Illustration 1: Siemens Magnet Technology, Wharf Road

52.1.2 The Eynsham Directory records over 230 firms, predominantly in the service sector, many of which are sole traders. Emerging categories with five or more entries are:

- i. business development services
- ii. computer systems & software
- iii. fashion
- iv. fast food & takeaways
- v. health & well-being
- vi. media & marketing



Illustration 2: The quiriness of Eynsham's small firms is part of their attraction



Illustration 3: Eynsham has had links with the printing profession for hundreds of years

52.1.3 Categories no longer available include chimney sweeps, cycle repairs, thatchers and electricians.

52.1.4 Survey Question 6 asked about employment status. The responses are shown below, with figures from the 2001 Census for comparison:

	2001 Census	Survey Q6
Employed	73%	48%
- Employees	-	40%
- Self-employed ¹	-	6%
- Self-employed ²	-	2%
Unemployed	2%	2%
Economically inactive	24%	49%
- In full-time education	-	4%
- Unwaged	-	4%
- Retired	-	39%
- Sick /disabled	-	2%
Total respondents	3430	795

52.1.5 As the table above shows, the percentages of people in our survey who are in employment or retired differ sharply from 2001 Census data. It is clear that a third of the work-force is not represented in our (voluntary) survey, possibly because retired people were more likely to complete it.

52.1.6 Question 7 turned to employment location, asking: “If you work, where do you work?”

Responses were as follows (total respondents 412):

i.	in Oxford	108	(26%)
ii.	In Eynsham	88	(21%)
iii.	At home	58	(14%)
iv.	In Witney	36	(9%)
v.	Other	122	(29%)

52.1.7 From these results it seems that 36% of people who work, do so in Eynsham – at home or at another workplace in the village. Most of the 29% whose work location is 'Other' are employed in this geographic area, as the average journey to work is 7.98 miles³.

52.1.8 In contrast, West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011: Employment states that:

“surveys of employment sites in the rural areas indicate that only around 15% of the workforce live locally, i.e. within 3 miles, whilst nearly 25% commute over 13 miles to work, usually by car.”

52.1.9 The variation in our survey may be due to our 'sampling' method: we may have captured chiefly the experience of part-time workers. This conclusion is supported by the Local Plan's comments on differences between full- and part-time workers:

“Surveys of new housing (in Witney) indicate that only around 17% of new full-time workers work in the town (compared to 27% in Oxford) although approaching 50% of the part-time workforce does work in Witney.”

1 not employing staff
2 employing staff
3 2001 Census

52.1.10 In 2001 approximately 15% of West Oxfordshire working residents worked in Oxford. The Local Plan indicates a shift in this pattern:

“Local surveys of new housing in settlements close to Oxford suggest that over 40% of new residents work in the City of Oxford.”

52.1.11 Our survey results fall mid-way between the two at 26%; but whatever the exact figure there’s no escaping the impact of Oxford on Eynsham housing and Eynsham traffic.

52.1.12 Closure of the Oxford Instruments site on Old Station Way in 2006 involved redundancy or relocation for around 180 employees. According to the HR section “not many” of these were Eynsham residents: since the work was skilled, it drew in staff from Witney and surrounding villages. The local loss has been mainly in terms of office jobs; and custom to local pubs, catering and other support services.



Illustration 4: Entrance to Oakfield Industrial Estate

The company is negotiating sale of the premises so further opportunities may arise.

52.1.13 On a similar scale are losses at Siemens Magnet Technology, where numbers fell from 709 at the start of 2006 to around 645 at the end. Approximately 70 employees lived in Eynsham at the beginning of 2007.

52.1.14 However, six vacant premises in the village centre have re-opened in the last year, bringing an increase in employment diversity. Nor are so many units standing empty – David Pimm's complex of 30 offices in Abbey Street is almost fully let – which he stresses marks only a recovery to levels of two to three years ago.



Illustration 5: Signs for offices in Abbey Street, central Eynsham

52.1.15 Travel to work modes, drawn from the 2001 census, are shown below:

Public Transport	299	12%
Car, motorcycle, or van	1619	63%
Work at home / other	636	25%

52.1.1 Responses to the Parish Council survey on bus use among residents in summer 2006 were disappointing (see Section 56.1.8). The potential for reducing traffic within Eynsham by increasing bus/bike use is largely unexplored; so far the strongest advocates are students at Eynsham Primary School (Section 58.3.8).

52.2 Employment: The Opinions and The Vision

52.2.1 Our survey Question 9 asked:

“Should the following be encouraged in Eynsham ...?”

This question yielded 755 responses. Employment issues took both second and third places:

	Favour or strongly agree	
i. Affordable housing	449	(59%)
ii. More jobs in Eynsham	418	(55%)
iii. Small retail development	407	(53%)

52.2.2 Preferences follow, in descending order of popularity:

	Favour	(Strongly Favour	(
i. Small retail development	2	(1	(
ii. Small business development	2	(8	(
iii. Small scale industrial workshops	1	(7	(

Interestingly, the call for more jobs, and implied need for more houses, is in direct conflict with any desire to keep the village “as it is”.

52.2.3 Question 8 asked:

“If you intend to become self-employed what barriers/issues do you feel might restrict you?”

81 responses were given, in descending order:

i. Lack of start-up finance	48	(59%)
ii. Lack of premises	29	(36%)
iii. Lack of confidence	24	(30%)
iv. Need for business skills	17	(21%)
v. Lack of advice/information	17	(21%)
vi. Lack of contacts	13	(16%)
vii. Lack of required technical skills	5	(6%)
viii. Other	3	(4%)