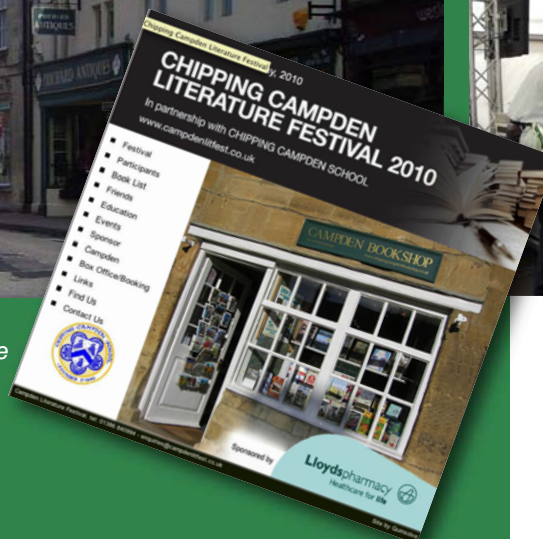


Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum

GMTF economic recovery research



Picture courtesy of Winchcombe Walkers Are Welcome



June 2010

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COMMUNITY LIST

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4. **Cirencester**
5. **Coleford**
6. **Fairford**
7. **Lechlade**
8. **Nailsworth***
9. **Newent**
10. **Northleach**
11. **Stonehouse***
12. **Stow-on-the-Wold***
13. **Tetbury**
14. **Tewkesbury**
15. **Winchcombe**
16. **Wotton-under-Edge**

* Representatives of these communities have not responded to the survey to date.

Background

This research was conducted to update findings from previous GMTF surveys into the impact of the economic downturn on member market towns. The first survey was published in June 2009, and the research was subsequently updated the following November.

For this latest piece of research, contact was made with all 16 Forum member communities, via District and Town Councils, Chambers of Commerce and/or Business Clubs or groups between April 1 and May 24, 2010, and they were asked to complete a brief questionnaire.

Most questionnaires were completed and returned by e-mail, while some information was gathered via telephone interviews. Three towns – Nailsworth, Stonehouse and Stow-on-the-Wold – are not included in this survey as they did not provide information. And some of the figures on shop closures provided by Town Councils or Chambers of Commerce are estimates - nevertheless, the findings provide a reliable health check of the towns' local economies.

Data from the previous two surveys also allows us to build up a longer-term picture of how our market towns have weathered the recession and how they are now faring amid economic recovery. A major aim of this research is also to showcase and share the range of initiatives towns are employing to help their shops and businesses.

Finally as in previous surveys, we are indebted to all those who took time to provide information for this research, despite their busy workloads.

Please note: the information and comments in this publication were supplied by representatives of each community, and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum.

Martin Whittaker
Viva Communications Limited
www.viva-communications.co.uk

Headline findings

- Based on data from 13 of the 16 member market towns, the number of closures among shops and other town centre businesses has almost tripled in the last six months, compared to the previous six months. There were 39 closures up to April 2010, compared with 14 in the same towns up to October 2009.
- Around half the closures were directly attributed to the effects of recession. A number of closures were attributed to high rent increases.
- There has been no change in the number of new shops opening – 30 have opened in the last six months, the same number as in the previous six months.
- Towns responding to the survey have seen a slight increase in the number of town centre shops and businesses currently standing empty. In the 13 towns there are currently an estimated 77 empty premises, compared with 73 in last Autumn's survey. In May 2009, the same towns had 85 empty shops/businesses.
- Of the 39 shops or other businesses closing during the last six months, 36 were independently-run while three were part of national or local chains.
- Of business types, clothes shops have been hardest hit by closures (9 shops), followed by cafes/restaurants (7) and gift shops (4).

How towns are faring on the road to economic recovery – a snapshot



Chipping Campden is fighting back thanks to a dynamic partnership of local organisations. Not-for-profit company Cotswold Edge Enterprises Ltd, is working alongside

Chipping Campden Information Centre and arts and crafts group Campden Enterprise, to make the most of the town's appeal as a tourist attraction.



Newent & District Business Club has developed a series of events, including business breakfasts, to encourage local firms to network.



Cirencester is planning another 'I Love Cirencester' event following the success of last year's, and there are plans for a local database linked to the Town Council's new website, which will

showcase the town's shops and other businesses. The town is also launching a Summer Campaign, encouraging people to support their local businesses.



Winchcombe is planning a 'Spring Clean' and aims to stage a July Street Fair from next year, in a joint initiative between the Town Council and Business Forum working with other groups. The town also

staged the first Winchcombe Walking Festival in May, which was partly funded by Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum. Another similar event is planned for next year.

Picture courtesy of Winchcombe Walkers Are Welcome



Fairford Town Council has created a 'Guide to Fairford', indicating what the town has to offer. And it has joined forces with neighbouring **Lechlade** to stage the first ever Fairford and Lechlade Food & Drink Festival.



Overview of the 16 GMTF member communities

TOWNS	Total town centre capacity shops/businesses	Shops/businesses closed since October '09	Shops/businesses opened since October '09	Closures attributed to recession
Chipping Campden	+/-65	9	0	5
Churchdown	20	1	3	1
Cinderford	116	not known	not known	
Cirencester	270	2	6	
Coleford	145	9	4	4
Fairford	36	0	0	
Lechlade	27	4	2	3
Nailsworth				
Newent	95	4	4	1
Northleach	14	2	1	
Stonehouse				
Stow-on-the-Wold				
Tetbury	+/-140	1	1	
Tewkesbury	255	7	6	5
Winchcombe	+/-55	0	1	
Wotton-under-Edge	+/-94	0	2	

Comparison with November '09 survey (not including Nailsworth, Stonehouse or Stow-on-the-Wold)

TOWNS	Shops/businesses currently empty*		Closures since last survey		Openings since last survey	
	Oct '09	April 10	Oct '09	Apr 10	Oct '09	Apr 10
Chipping Campden	2	9	0	9	1	0
Churchdown	1	0	0	1	2	3
Cinderford	16	15	1	not known	3	not known
Cirencester	8	6	2	2	4	6
Coleford	8	5	1	9	4	4
Fairford	0	4	0	0	1	0
Lechlade	2	4	0	4	1	2
Newent	7	4	2	4	4	4
Northleach	1	3	0	2	0	1
Tetbury	3	4	1	1	4	1
Tewkesbury	17	18	5	7	3	6
Winchcombe	4	1	2	0	1	1
Wotton-u-Edge	4	4	0	0	2	2
Totals	73	77	14	39	30	30

* Note: some of these figures are estimates, and may have been affected by changes in sources of data since October '09

Case studies

'Trade local' boost to rural economy

The Gloucestershire Trade Local Campaign, funded by Gloucestershire County Council through the Economic Taskforce, managed by GMTF and supported by Gloucestershire First and the Federation of Small Businesses, is gathering pace. Grants of up to £2,000 are available to boost the local economy and support traders in the county's market towns.

Rural communities throughout the county can apply for the one-off grants to help fund events that will encourage more people to buy and trade 'local'. The campaign seeks to encourage local business groups to work together with town and parish councils and other organisations to promote the 'buy and trade local' message.

So far initiatives benefiting from grant awards include the Spring Showcase Food Festival held on Bank Holiday Monday, May 31 at Taurus Crafts in the Forest of Dean, with the help of a £2,000 grant. The event involved around 30 local food producers, allowing them to raise their profile, showcase their products and reach new customers.

Another recipient is the first Fairford and Lechlade Food and Drink Festival, which was awarded a £1,700 grant. And an initiative called 'Cirencester Local' has received a £2,000 grant to develop a range of trade local projects. (see case study right.)

Meanwhile, another valuable source of support for the local economy has come in the form of GMTF Development Fund grants. Recently, the Forum Board voted to continue with the successful funding scheme, which gives quick turnaround grants of up to £2,000 to the Forum's 16 member communities across Gloucestershire to help them develop local projects.

Projects receiving funding over the past 18 months include Stonehouse Regeneration Partnership's plans for walking and cycling leaflets to encourage people to travel into the town but leaving their cars at home, Wotton under Edge's CCTV system, Fairford and Lechlade Business Club, Winchcombe Day Centre's minibus, North Cotswold Community radio, Chipping Campden's community website and the Churchdown Players.

The Forum's 16 member communities can also access 15 hours of specialist Technical Advice and support from community development experts as part of their membership benefits and learn from other towns at networking events held around the county.

Cirencester Local

Cirencester has launched a major initiative to boost trade for its town centre shops and businesses. Its 'Cirencester Local' initiative gets underway with the help of a £2,000 grant under the Gloucestershire Trade Local Campaign.

Projects will include a Business & Shoppers' Database to be hosted on a new Cirencester Town Council Website. This will aim to publicise local services, shops and businesses, encourage local businesses to trade with each other, and urge residents to use local shops and other businesses.

Cirencester Local will also include a Summer Campaign, encouraging people to support their local businesses and will seek to attract more visitors to Cirencester. Other local community events will be promoted in a new summer magazine.

The project is linked to other activities such as the development of a better tourism and marketing approach for the town, preparation of a town guide, co-ordination of town-wide events and the development of business skills.

This project is part of the 'Our Future Cirencester' community plan which is based on a wide range of consultation activities. Consultations showed that local people wanted to support local businesses, that businesses wanted to be supported by local suppliers, and, that small independent shops are a key part of the town's identity.

"The last year of economic uncertainty has been challenging," said Jonathan Davies, vice-president of Cirencester Chamber of Commerce. "It is vital that the profile of what the town has to offer is raised. Cirencester is competing with many larger towns for business and needs to make a concerted effort to raise its profile and make sure the local and wider community knows what it has to offer.

"By encouraging people to think about buying what they need locally, this initiative will ensure that residents and businesses are aware of what is available on their own doorstep."

Chipping Campden fights back

A partnership approach is helping Chipping Campden plan for the future and boost its local economy. Sadly, the town's Chamber of Trade is no longer active – but a collaboration of organisations is seizing the initiative to help the community recover from the effects of recession.

Cotswold Edge Enterprise Ltd, a not-for-profit company, is working with Chipping Campden Information Centre and Campden Enterprise, an arts & crafts group. The partnership's aim is to make the most of the town's biggest source of income – tourism – and examine how to improve what Chipping Campden has to offer visitors.

The area's magnificent gardens are already an attraction and the town has a thriving Music Festival in May, which has also spawned a Literature Festival. Chipping Campden is also famous for its own Cotswold Olimpicks (www.olimpickgames.co.uk) and plans are underway to make the most of opportunities brought by that other sporting event in London in 2012.

Other events in the pipeline include an arts & crafts show in September, and a new initiative is being planned along the lines of last year's successful 'We Love Wotton' campaign, which brought visitors flocking to Wotton-under-Edge.

Part of the partnership's aim is to encourage local people to use their local shops. "When people were snowed in during the winter, they suddenly realised they could just walk into their local butchers in the town," said town councillor Liz Hodges, one of those behind the partnership.



"We would like them to be using local shops the rest of the time too. And we are hoping that this new, dynamic partnership will get the momentum going again so that people can see there are opportunities to trade in Chipping Campden and that the town is viable.

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Food and Drink Festivals throughout the county proved to be great successes this year



Food for thought

Festivals celebrating locally grown and produced food are on the increase in Gloucestershire, as market towns find that such events are also a good way to 'sell' the town to visitors and residents alike as a place to buy local produce.

Tewkesbury's Food & Drink Festival is well established – now in its sixth year, it is considered one of the best food festivals in the country. This year's event in May had over 150 stallholders and attracted an estimated 11,000 people.

Attractions included cookery demonstrations by chef James Martin, chocolate sculptures, cider and perry tasting, plus stalls selling arts and crafts. It also featured the Tewkesbury Recipe Trail, where chefs demonstrate a recipe and visitors are given leaflets with the recipe and ingredients which can be bought in town. The idea was developed by a partnership of town business groups and is evidence that the festival has really become established with local traders.

"The festival obviously benefits Tewkesbury, raising the town's profile," said Katie Power, economic development officer with Tewkesbury Borough Council. "This year as well as visitors from Gloucestershire, it's increasingly attracting people from the Midlands and South West. We even had an enquiry from someone in London wanting to establish a food and drink festival there. Visitors to the festival site do then go into town and spend money, so we are helping the local economy. It really benefits Tewkesbury's tourism businesses – all the local hotels get booked up." (see www.tewkesburyfoodfestival.co.uk)

Tetbury's Food & Drink Festival in September is now in its fourth year and it is growing – from 12 stalls in its first year to an expected 50 this year. (see www.tetburyfooddrinkfestival.com)

Meanwhile, Fairford and Lechlade have hosted their very first joint Food & Drink Festival, with the support of a £1,700 grant from the Gloucestershire Trade Local Campaign. Its opening weekend in Lechlade on May 2 attracted hundreds of visitors and 24 stallholders offered the best of the two towns' local produce.

The festival culminated in a second event at Fairford Market Place on June 6th including cookery demonstrations by Cotswold Chef Rob Rees, and there were a series of events throughout May in bars, restaurants and cafes in the two historic towns.

"The day was a wonderful example of a community working together, celebrating local businesses and produce, and enjoying themselves," said spokeswoman Chris Roberts. (see www.fairford-lechladefoodanddrink.co.uk)

Another new event is the Spring Showcase Food Festival, held on May 31 in Lydney – again, supported by the Gloucestershire Trade Local Campaign. The festival attracted more than 2,500 visitors and involved around 30 local food producers offering a range of products, including honey, ice cream, cider and beers, chocolates and cheeses.

Organiser Amanda Smith said: "We were delighted to receive the Trade Local Campaign grant which was essential to us to help promote the event more widely, and to put on more workshops to attract more visitors." (See www.forestshowcase.org)

Survey results in detail

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1 CHIPPING CAMPDEN (1 OF 2)

Organisation/contact

Liz Hodges, Town Council and Cotswold Edge Enterprise Ltd djhodges@btconnect.com

(NOTE: Chipping Campden Chamber of Trade is now defunct. Economic recovery is taking place under the auspices of Cotswold Edge Enterprise Ltd, a not-for-profit company with socio/economic objectives, alongside Chipping Campden Information Centre and Campden Enterprise, an arts and crafts group)

Town population 2,294

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 60-70 (estimate)

Number currently empty 9

Closures since October '09 9

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Shoe shop	independent	4 years	proprietor	mainly	
Nursery	independent	3 years	none		relocated to adjacent village
Gift shop	independent	18 months	not known		lack of frontage to high street and high rental
Gift shop	independent	4-5 years	not known	mainly	high rental
Photo gallery	independent	2 years	not known	partly	specialist outlet just didn't 'take off'
Babywear shop	independent	2 years	proprietor	partly	lack of frontage to high street and high rental
Handbag shop	independent	2years	proprietor	partly	as above
Garage/petrol station	independent	50+ years	2-3	no	sold for building
Ladies' fashion	local chain	8-10 years	2.5 part-time	not known	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 None

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CHIPPING CAMPDEN (2 OF 2)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Worsened.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Tourism remains a mainstay of income, therefore we are currently applying for grants to improve stays through quality of the 'Campden Experience'.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

Chipping Campden has been relatively recession proof (until this economic downturn). Where businesses own their own premises then it has been easier for them to remain trading. However this does lead to a complacency of blaming everyone else for the lack of trade, viz: it's the car parking (yes, it can be problematical but certainly not impossible). But business attitudes are difficult to alter.

In the past decade we have lost two major outlets in which both proprietors knew their business – a specialist needlework shop and a lady's dress shop. These are now an art gallery and a tea room. Despite the relatively low footfall in the town, rents have always been high – property prices on the High Street are extremely high. The businesses that do well are those that really know their market and move with it. It speaks volumes that the Chamber of Trade has become defunct; hopefully the new grouping, which is fairly dynamic, will succeed because it has a more outward vision.

Survey results in detail

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2 CHURCHDOWN

Organisation/contact

Ruth Warne, Clerk to Churchdown Parish Council

01452 713528 churchdownnpc-clerk@wwmail.co.uk

Town population

11,155

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 20 (estimate)

Number currently empty None

Closures since October '09 1 (to be turned into an estate agents)

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Clothes shop	independent	10 years at least	4-5 part time	their landlord put their rent up substantially	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 3

Types of business opened

- Coffee shop (independent)
- Garden centre (chain)
- Betting shop (chain)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

It is very difficult to judge – possibly improving due to the move of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps to Camp Imjin on Innsworth Lane.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Not aware of any done so far, but this council is planning to fund some Christmas lights to be put up on corner of Parton Road and Cheltenham Road East, with a message from local traders, to encourage passers-by to drop into the local shops.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

A general impression is that people are struggling moneywise; more and more supermarket shopping for cheaper prices, hence less shopping at small local stores.

There are many more people operating small gardening and grounds maintenance businesses so prices for this kind of work have fallen. I have the impression that generally big companies are still doing OK (economies of scale), and very small businesses are managing, but it is the in-between size (family-based firms, who do very good work, and have invested in equipment over the years) which are struggling – they are not making enough money to be able to reinvest in new machinery/equipment.

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3 CINDERFORD

Organisation/contact

Lynda Thomas, Clerk to Cinderford Town Council

01594 822599 cinderfordtc@aic.co.uk

Town population

8,510

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 116 (estimate)

Number currently empty 15

Closures since October '09 not known

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 not known

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Things seem to be looking a bit better in the town. A shop in one of the town's prime spots was quite an eyesore previously, but it's now starting to look better, one of the pubs is having its frontage done up and there is a new art gallery due to open. So there are a few encouraging signs that perhaps we are starting to see an upward trend.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

We have some town centre improvements in the pipeline, for example giving better disabled parking and better use of the market space. One of the ideas is to reduce car access and encourage people to use the bicycle links, though it is very early days.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

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4 CIRENCESTER

Organisation/contact

Jonathan Davies, Cirencester Chamber of Commerce

01285 642614

jsjdavies@yahoo.com

Town population

19,278

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 270 (estimate)

Number currently empty Approximately 6

Closures since October '09 2 (estimate)

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Fashion	independent	not known	not known	not known	
Fashion	independent	not known	not known	not known	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09

6

Types of business opened

- Café (chain)
- Sorted (type not known) (independent)
- Sushi bar (independent)
- Chocolate shop (independent)
- Herbal shop (chain)
- Toy shop (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Improved.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

We are planning another 'I love Cirencester' event as well as a magazine to promote all that is on in Cirencester during the Summer. We are also planning to build a local database linked to the new Town Council website which will showcase what shops / businesses are available in Cirencester and encourage people to think local first when they need to buy something. All these initiatives are being delivered through Our Future Cirencester with the help of Cirencester Chamber of Commerce.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

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5 COLEFORD (1 of 2)

Organisation/contact

Janet Marrott, Coleford Area Partnership

01594 836469

marrott@tiscali.co.uk

Town population

8,578

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 145

Number currently empty 5

Closures since October '09 9

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Beautician	independent	approx 3 years	4 (est)	believed to be the case	
Chinese restaurant	independent	3 years	3 (est)	as above	
English café	independent	4 years	4	as above	
Estate agent	independent, also in marketing group	not known	none		change to geographical priorities
DVD shop	independent	5 years +	3 part time		DVDs available on line etc
Indian restaurant	independent	6 years	not known		lack of trade/ too much competition
Wedding outfitters	small Glos chain	not known	not known		Never began opening. Landlord changed locks
Gift shop	independent	7 years	2 part time	Yes	
Building society (ind. financial adviser)	independent	2 years under present agent	4		Still operating elsewhere as financial advisor

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 4

Types of shop/business opened

- Barber's shop (independent)
- Barber's shop (independent)
- Sweet shop (independent)
- Carers' establishment (not known)

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COLEFORD (2 OF 2)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Somerfield has now been sold by the Co-op to an independent company and this has resulted in both premises now being open for longer hours to attract custom – one bright light in the town. No confirmation of any staff reductions in other existing businesses.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Town Council's attempt to encourage people to stay in town on Easter Saturday by giving away free hot cross buns and encouraging use of the area round the clock tower by local organisations had little effect. Having said that, the weather was very cold and showery. Unfortunately the same thing happened last year.

The Annual Carnival of Transport on Easter Monday brought in excess of 600 vehicles on display and more than 10,000 people to the town. This was the thirteenth consecutive event. The Main Place (Coleford's new Community Enterprise Centre) staged an Open Day and there were just over 1,000 visitors in six hours.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

The reduction of goods for sale is very noticeable at the present time. Two more businesses are currently advertising closing down sales.

Survey results in detail

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6 FAIRFORD

Organisation/contact

Christine Roberts, Fairford and Lechlade Business Club
Joseph Cusack, Town Mayor, Fairford Town Council

01285 712150

chris@cotswoldwireless.co.uk

01285 713638

jpfcusack@aol.co.uk

Town population

3,300

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 36 (estimate)

Number currently empty

4

Closures since October '09

none

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09

none

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Remained the same.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

While competition between the businesses is good, the Council has created a 'Guide to Fairford' indicating to new residents what Fairford has to offer and who is who, i.e. all town councillors, churches, doctors, hospital, schools and we have local news from the latest Fairford Newsletter. This has only just been introduced and we will have to wait and see what feedback we get.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

The recession has effected businesses within the community and while profits might not be as previous years, a number of businesses have used initiatives to promote what they have to offer.

The public houses have promoted food i.e. steak nights etc, to encourage new punters, fast food takeaways have made efforts to deliver food to your door and hairdressers and beauty salons are continually promoting what is new to the trade.

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7 LECHLADE

Organisation/contact

Tim Small. Chairman, Fairford and Lechlade Business Club 01367 253266 tim@timtrout.co.uk

Town population

3,007

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 27 (estimate)

Number currently empty

4

Closures since October '09

4

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Picture framer	independent	9 years	3	yes	
Dress agency	independent	6 years	3	yes	
Gift shop	independent	5 years	3	yes	
Tattoo parlour	independent	1 year	3	not known	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 2

Types of business opened

- Book shop (independent)
- Barber (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Probably the same but everyone is nervous. I have huge criticism that the Town Council should be gathering this information on a regular basis, but isn't. They were totally uninterested when I asked for help filling in this survey. Also there is total despair at the standard of accommodation and facilities in Lechlade, resulting in visitors not staying that long and/or spending money.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

The Fairford and Lechlade Business Club is growing from strength to strength. We have monthly meetings, which are popular and there are business discount schemes for members which is working well. We held a six week Food and Drink Festival, starting on May 2nd. Local businesses all did their bit to make this a success.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

I think the business community is more worried about the intolerable burden of red tape and legislation than the recession. When times are hard, which they are, the increased workload in paperwork and employment rights are wearing business owners down. People are fed up and scared. New parking restrictions, in both towns, are causing widespread concern. Whether the two are connected I do not know, but the level of apathy in the towns towards getting things done is quite striking. This is frightening.

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Survey results in detail

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9 NEWENT

Organisation/contact

Gareth Roberts, Chair Newent Business Club

01452 348163

gareth@gdrsolutions.co.uk

Town population

5,226

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area

95 (est) (Note: more capacity now due to conversion)

Number currently empty

4

Closures since October '09

4

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Takeaway	independent	approx 1 year	not known	not known	
Museum	independent	20 years	not known	no	
Barber	independent	approx 1 year	1	no	
Travel agent	independent	20 years	3	yes	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09

4

Types of business opened

- Motorcycle shop (independent)
- Polish deli (independent)
- Care business (independent)
- Cake shop (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Although the rate of occupancy in Newent is still good, we have seen a significant drop in tourism footfall since The Shambles museum was shut in '09.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Newent & District Business Club has developed business networking meetings, which include business breakfasts to encourage local businesses to network with each other. Initial discussions are in place with Gloucestershire First to get speakers into the town on a quarterly basis to discuss business matters.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

Newent has managed to maintain a high level of occupancy in town, and thanks to the efforts of voluntary organisations such as the Newent Initiative and Newent in Bloom, there is a good look to the town. Some retailers have struggled more than others, but have continued to innovate to attempt to get average spend levels up. Investment from the Town Council into key initiatives has been reduced, which has had a negative effect. We are concerned about the implications of future cuts and/or VAT increases.

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10 NORTHLEACH

Organisation/contact

Chris Hancock, Mayor

861284

chris.hancock@northleach.gov.uk

Town population

1,567

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 14 (estimate)

Number currently empty 3

Closures since October '09 2

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Gallery	independent	20 years approx	no		retirement
Chinese takeaway	independent	5 years approx	not known	assumed but not known	

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09

1

Types of business opened

- Undertaker (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Fairly static, perhaps now improving.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

None here – we are too small in terms of manpower and financial resource to assist.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

Well-managed businesses appear to have suffered no major effects. One hairdresser has retrenched from a sister shop in Cheltenham into just one set of premises here in Northleach, where the overheads are doubtless lower.

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13 TETBURY

Organisation/contact

Kathryn Limoi, Tetbury Chamber of Commerce

07885 106717

kathrynlimoi@o2email.co.uk

Town population

5,324

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 130-150 (estimate)

Number currently empty 4

Closures since October '09 1

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Architect	independent			no	relocating business

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 1

Types of business opened

- Charity shop (chain)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Traders are telling me they are finding the first part of 2010 harder than this time last year.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

There have been more events and 'fairs' – for example, Yellow Lighted Bookshop has been holding a three week festival, including events and book readings, shared between Tetbury and Nailsworth, where it also has a shop. We also have Woolsack happening in a couple of weeks. While some events, like the cheese rolling, have gone, we still have this traditional event happening on a Bank Holiday. And instead of it just being a Bank Holiday Monday, as it has been historically, we are trying to extend it over a weekend.

Another event is the Food & Drink Festival in September. This is now in its fourth year and it's really growing – from 12 stalls in its first year, and this year we are aiming for 50. The Classical Music Festival in October is another event that brings people in. We are also looking at other ideas for events, including the possibility of a mini antiques market as the town has so many antique shops; Tetbury also has a lot of up-market fashion shops, so we have been looking at the possibility of staging a fashion fortnight.

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14 TEWKESBURY (1 OF 2)

Organisation/contact

Katie Power, Tewkesbury Borough Council

01684 272249

katie.power@tewkisbury.gov.uk

Town population

10,470

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 255 (est)

Number currently empty 18

Closures since October '09 7

Types of shop/business closed

Business type	Chain/ Independent	Time established	Jobs lost	Closure due to recession?	Other reasons for closure
Café	independent	not known	not known	yes	
Music shop	independent	not known	not known	yes	
Toy shop	independent	not known	not known	yes	
Off license	chain	not known	not known	yes	
Ladies' clothes	independent	not known	not known	yes	
Accountant	independent	not known	not known		relocation of business
Café	independent	not known	not known		yes

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 6

Types of shop/business opened

- Café restaurant (independent)
- Café restaurant (independent)
- Wine shop (independent)
- Clothes shop (chain)
- Pub/ nightclub (independent)
- Insurance broker (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

A recent survey indicated that 32% of businesses thought business would improve, 11% thought business would be down and 58% thought it would remain the same.

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TEWKESBURY (2 OF 2)

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

- Two year programme of retail support which included: shop front improvement grants, town centre shopping guides, Christmas gift voucher scheme, Christmas shopping guides and e-marketing campaign, town centre business awards, IT marketing courses and web based shopping directory giving customers online access to retailers goods and services.
- In June '09 Tewkesbury Borough Council commissioned Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd to conduct a series of user and footfall surveys in the retail centres of Tewkesbury, Winchcombe and Bishop's Cleeve. The surveys provide an important 'health check' measure for the three retail centres showing how many people have been visiting and why. It also provides invaluable information on the profile of users within the three retail centres, understanding likes and dislikes, and helping identify measures that could be implemented to further enhance the experience of each of the retail centres.

The 2009 surveys are a direct replication of those undertaken as part of the Vitality, Viability and Vulnerability Study in 2008 and this will provide an ideal opportunity for comparison. The surveys reveal that Winchcombe, Tewkesbury and Bishop's Cleeve fared the recession well in 2009, with Tewkesbury enjoying 61 per cent more weekend visitors compared with 2008.

Compared with 2008, Tewkesbury enjoyed an increase of 37 per cent more visitors on weekdays, 33 per cent more visitors on the market day and 61 per cent more visitors during the weekends. Bishop's Cleeve saw both an increase in visitors during the weekdays and at the weekends, while Winchcombe, which saw the highest number of visitors at the weekend, saw a slight drop overall – though this is considered to be reflective of daily fluctuations. The survey results also offer profiles of town centre users, including their likes and dislikes, as well as identifying ways to further enhance the centres.

The important role of convenience-based shopping in all three town centres is highlighted and the high number of day-to-day trips emphasise the important local function of the three towns. Indeed, the majority of respondents reported that they visit their local centre once a week or more. Convenience-based shopping is further highlighted by the fact that the majority of respondents in each of the retail centres live within the surrounding area. The surveys identified that each of the centres provide a great range of shops, a good environment and are well-placed in terms of proximity to homes.

- A small fund was established to help businesses across the borough during the economic downturn and the funding for this came from the extra income received from the reduction in VAT, along with other savings made by the council. This work included a programme of initiatives to help support local businesses, the main ones being: The Small Business Grant Scheme, free internet marketing courses and a borough-wide business networking event.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

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15 WINCHCOMBE

Organisation/contact

Martin Williams, vice-chair, Winchcombe Business Forum

01242 604466

martin@pinecone.f2s.com

Town population

4,506

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area approx 55 (estimate)

Number currently empty

1

Closures since October '09

none

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09

1

Types of shop/business opened

- Office (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

The outlook has remained the same but the Winchcombe retail offer is improving.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Currently planning a 'Winchcombe Spring Clean' leading to a 'July Street Fair' (this has since been put off until next year) trying to take advantage of the Gloucestershire Trade Local Campaign. This will be a joint initiative between the Town Council and Business Forum working with other groups in the town. If this is successful it might become a yearly event.

Also Winchcombe has its first Walking Festival in May organised by the Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers steering group. This may also become a yearly event.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

The first part of the year has been a bit slower, but is this recession or weather?

But any slow-down should make any proactive business look within, at what savings can be made and whether it is doing the most it can to attract new business!

Pubs and restaurants have been quieter as more people have tended to eat and entertain at home, but this has helped some food shops.

Winchcombe is an older populated town. Its population is very loyal but as new younger people move in, the town has to work harder to get into their routine (jumping into a car and going elsewhere is taken as normal, why use local?)

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16 WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE

Organisation/contact

Glenys Sykes, Wotton Town Council clerk (01453) 843210 towncouncil@wotton-under-edge.com

Town population 5,687

Total retail/business units in High Street/main shopping area 93-94 (estimate)

Number currently empty 4

Closures since October '09 none

New shops/businesses opened since October 1 '09 2

Types of shop/business opened

- Kitchen showroom & design business (independent)
- Sewn goods & fabric items/ second hand book shop (independent)

Do you consider that the outlook for the local economy has improved, worsened or remained the same since October '09?

Level of trade remaining much the same, I think.

Please give details of any recent (or planned) activities or initiatives your town has adopted to help shops and other businesses amid the economic recovery.

Wotton in Bloom. Our Regeneration Partnership and Chamber of Trade have mounted a joint campaign to get hanging baskets up in the main streets of the town. Baskets, brackets and plants are all supplied by traders in the town, put up by a local handyman, maintained and watered by a local company as part of the deal, all in for less than £20 per basket. There have been 150-plus takers and baskets should be going up early in June.

Please give further comments on the impact of the recession on your town's shops and other businesses.

Most businesses seem to be hanging in there. There were many complaints and much resentment when the entire road was closed at two days' notice for a whole week for traffic calming works. The jury is out on whether the traffic has been calmed!

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APPENDIX:
**Summary of types of shops/businesses closed in
13 GMTF towns responding to the survey**

Architect	1
Care	1
Clothing:	
All	5
Children	1
Women.....	3
Shoes.....	1
Estate agency.....	1
Financial:	
Accountant.....	1
Financial adviser/mortgage broker	1
Food and drink:	
Café/restaurant	7
Off licence	1
Gifts, cards	4
Music/DVD	2
Museum/gallery	3
Personal care:	
Barber	1
Beauty therapies	1
Tattoo parlour.....	1
Petrol station.....	1
Picture framer	1
Toys.....	1
Travel agent	1
TOTAL	39