

Delivering the Customer Service and Access Strategy – Options Feasibility Assessment for a One Stop Shop in Shipston

Paper for presentation to the Stratford upon Avon Joint Committee - South
On 25th September 2008

Recommendations

That the South Joint Committee makes any comments it wishes prior to consideration of the report by the respective Cabinets of Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council.

1 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this paper is to

- Present the results of the feasibility assessment, incorporating the views of the Stour Community Forum held on the 9th September 2008
- Propose a preferred option for which agreement is sought to conduct an in-depth study including full cost appraisal, to test practicalities of implementing the preferred option.

2 Context

This assessment is made against the background of commitments & targets set in documents such as the Local Area Agreement 2008-11, Warwickshire Direct Partnership Joint Customer Service and Access Strategy 2007-12, Stratford District Corporate Strategy 2008-12 and Customer Strategy 2007-10. These strategies establish the need to deliver more multi-agency one-stop-shops across the County.

Council Services are currently delivered from a number of individual properties within the town, which are occupied variously by the Town, District and County Councils, with some having multiple-occupancy. The need for rationalisation of property in the town was highlighted in a report, Community & Leisure Survey 2005, which was commissioned jointly by Stratford District Council and Stour Power.

A list services that have the potential to be delivered from a One Stop Shop in Shipston is shown at Appendix 2 to this report.

3 Methodology

The generation of this paper has been achieved by a combination of face-to-face interviews and meetings, primary research in and around the town of Shipston and from secondary research of existing information and data from a range of sources. A list of the people who contributed to the project is at Appendix 1.

Consultation with the Stour Community Forum took place on the 9th of September 2008. The Forum voiced tremendous support for the One Stop Shop and identified that a wider variety of opening times would be very convenient and allows better access for the community.

The enhancement of the current service was welcomed and it was widely believed within the community that this service would be very useful. The Forum also thought the inclusion of the Citizens Advice Bureau would be a useful addition. The background of one-stop-shops was explained to the Forum and as were the limitations imposed by finite budgets, in relation to seeking the best value for money solutions to public service provision. Parishes were also very interested and seemed impressed with the developments.

4 Background

The background section of this paper considers the potential size and service needs of the client groups that may make use of the proposed one stop shop located in Shipston town. A detailed analysis of the socio-economic picture of Shipston is at Appendix 3.

In determining a potential catchment area for the One Stop Shop, and, therefore, the households and population to include within the analysis, a zone has been drawn around Shipston (as illustrated in Figure 1, Appendix 3). The zone equates to those households approximately 7.65 km from Shipston Area Office. Several households outside the zone were also included, such as those households to the south and east of the zone whose alternative choice of One Stop Shop in Warwickshire is limited, and a small number to the North and North West that fall within statistical boundaries.

5 Resident Population

The population residing in the Shipston Area (shaded in Figure 1, Appendix 3) is estimated at 13,343 and was determined using a combination of 2005 mid year ward population estimates and 2001 Census Output Area estimates. Some 84% of the estimated population was derived from the 2005 population estimates. Just over one fifth (22%) of the population in the marked area is aged 65 and over, higher than Warwickshire's average of 17%.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation indicates that "Shipston West & Town Centre" falls with the top 50% of most deprived areas for income, education achievement and access to housing and "Shipston South & Furze Hill" falls with the top 24% of the most deprived areas for access to key local services. (Table 9, Section 2, Research Paper August 2008)

6 Business Options Assessment

6.1 SDC Area Office - Telegraph Street

The SDC Area Office in Telegraph Street benefits from a central location in Shipston.

Internally it is customised to provide customer service on the ground floor and appears to be DDA compliant, including a lift for access to the first floor. There

are questions about the size of the lift that will need to be explored to ensure full DDA compliance is achievable. Originally designed as a domestic residence, the office accommodation on the ground floor is compact, but functionally adequate. The 60 sq. metres (approx) ground floor space will probably require reconfiguration to accommodate additional service delivery and the entrance hall could be better utilised.

First floor accommodation comprises 3 rooms, two of which are suitable for use as offices, each being approximately 15 sq. metres. One of these rooms is not often used. The third room on this floor is currently fitted-out as a kitchen area. There is also an attached single garage with WC and small store, which is currently used for storage by SDC Rodent Control.

Whilst the plot the Area Office sits on is small, it would appear to be possible to extend the building, in a limited way, if required, but the existing configuration should provide sufficient space in the interim or 'test bed' period.

There is currently no Condition Survey in place for this building, but there are no obvious issues (other than those with the lift) and the building appears to be in sound condition, well equipped and in good decorative order.

6.1.2 Public usage

Footfall to the Area Office for 2007/08 was c7,500 (around 625 per month). The office is open Monday to Friday between 09.00 and 17.00 (closed 1 hour for lunch each day).

6.1.3 Financial Aspects

The cost of running the Area Office for the year 2007/08 was in the region of £53,600, which, with c7,500 customers for the year, equates to a gross cost per person calling into the office at c£7.15.

Shipston is not included in the County Council's programme of One Stop Shops. Consequently, any funding for staffing and other costs for a One Stop Shop in Shipston would require submission of a report to the County Council's Cabinet for approval of the proposal and consideration of funding as part of the 2009/10 County Council Budget allocations. This is not simply a question of finding the funding for Shipston it will also require the consideration of issues relating to other settlements of a similar size and catchment area which are currently not included in the One Stop Shop Programme.

6.1.4 ICT

ICT links are broadband enabled via a router & secure VPN link to the Stratford Network. The SDC PCs are connected to an ADSL Router, which is connected to an ADSL line, so the PCs connect to SDC network for accessing resources and servers. The router links to the SDC firewall over the internet via a secured Branch Office VPN connection. WCC Comms Team consider that enabling the One Stop Shop software at Telegraph Street. to deliver WCC services would be almost cost free and a relatively simple task.

It will be necessary to assess the need to upgrade the ICT connectivity and infrastructure to ensure the full range of service provision is available, the cost

of which will need to be determined through a site assessment by SDC or WCC Comms Team. A wireless enabled facility would extend the use of the property and offer the potential to include a hot-desk for use by WCC and SDC staff. A business case would need to be prepared and presented to attract Council funding, but would be worth exploring from a business efficiency perspective.

6.1.5 Parking

The Area Office does not have designated public parking, but there is a public Pay and Display car park adjacent to the Office, which customers currently use and has the capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in footfall to the One Stop Shop.

6.1.6 Asset Implications

Clearly the development of the SDC Area Office would negate or delay the realisation of the asset value through the sale of the property. In current market conditions such a delay may be seen as advantageous and offers the prospect of higher sales value at the end of the interim period. The current market value appears to be in the region of £240,000, but no formal valuation has been conducted. Should a new-build project become a reality by say 2011-12, the sale value of the property could be assessed at that time.

6.1.7 Conclusion

The Area Office offers the most appropriate prospect for the location of an One Stop Shop, delivering extended services from SDC and WCC, and for providers such as CAB, Credit Union and other VCS organisations.

It is the only one, of the three buildings assessed, to have sufficient space (for the services being considered) and requires the least amount of work to bring the premises up to the required standard.

The opening of SDC Area Office as the Shipston One Stop Shop could be achieved, funding permitting, during Spring/Summer 2009.

6.2 Library and Information Centre

The Shipston Library is located in a rented building situated on the edge of the central area. The property was originally a Quaker Meeting House and it is understood that it is still used for that purpose. It is Listed (Grade 2) and is DDA compliant, on the ground floor only, but has no designated parking and there is no adjacent public parking.

Ground floor accommodation is relatively small for a library (approx 210 sq. metres). It is open plan with racking and shelving for books and other inventory items, librarian's desk and an area for public web access. There is no available space for the inclusion of additional One Stop Shop services. On the first floor there is a room of approx 80 sq metres, with a kitchen & WC attached. This is used as for library storage and access is by staircase only. The building is in excellent decorative order following recent refurbishment after flooding in 2007.

6.2.1 ICT

ICT access is in place for both Library work & public broadband access, so the extension of IT to included SDC services would be relatively straightforward. An IT Survey would be needed to confirm this.

6.2.2 Public Usage

Footfall figures for the Library are currently around 2,360 per month, which compares favourably with other similar Libraries in the County. The Library currently closes on Wednesdays, operates half-day on Fridays and Saturdays, with the other three days being normal library opening hours.

6.2.3 Conclusion

A number of factors combine to make the Library unsuitable for expansion as a One Stop Shop.

The compact ground floor offers few, if any, options for reconfiguration to accommodate One Stop Shop services. Making the upper floor DDA compliant is not a viable consideration and even if a case could be made, it is highly unlikely to receive landlord consent or Local Authority planning permission.

The location is not in the town centre, has no adjacent car parking and is located on the busy traffic route of Church Street.

The current rental agreement prevents any change of use from the existing Library. Finally there are continued concerns regarding a repeat of the flooding problems that closed the Library for several months in 2007.

6.3 Clark House

Clark House is owned by the Town Council and is centrally located with an SDC Pay and Display public car park adjacent. There is no dedicated parking space for Clark House itself.

The ground floor of the building comprises the Town Council office and the County Council's Register Office floor, each office being approx. 10 sq meters. A small kitchen area, WC & reception area complete the ground floor.

The room rented by WCC for use by the Registrar is also used by others, but mainly in the evenings. The Register Office opens only 10 -12 on Wednesdays and Fridays, but the rental agreement covers the full week. Registrars have experienced significant IT problems at Clark House with operating the software used for Registration work.

The upper floor comprises a single room (55 sq m), is equipped as the Town Council Chamber and meeting room and is reached by a staircase, which is equipped with a stair-lift. Whilst this may not be suitable for all people with disabilities, it is partial compliance with DDA. There are access issues to the ground floor and to the offices on the ground floor, for wheelchair users, but these require relatively minor works around a door ramp installation.

Town Council representatives have indicated a willingness to enter into discussions about further shared use of Clark House, but clearly recognise that the current accommodation offers very limited opportunity for expansion of services.

6.3.1 Financial aspects

No Financial information (Capital/Revenue) regarding Clark House is available. A small income of £1650 for the rental by Registrars is the only visible income currently generated. No Footfall figures are currently available for the current Opening times of 09.30 – 13.30 Monday to Friday.

6.3.2 Conclusion

As it currently stands Clark House offers little scope for development of a One Stop Shop. Accommodation is very limited and as owners of the building the Town Council clearly have first call on all available space. The ICT investment required to upgrade to an acceptable service are also significant with a minimum initial capital outlay of £9713, with the potential for an additional spend of approaching £20,000 for a faster 100 mbs service if necessary. Running costs would also be significantly higher.

7 Longer-term Provision

This assessment is designed to identify a preferred short-term option to provide a 'one-stop' facility in Shipston-on-Stour. It is envisaged that any investment required to adapt the Telegraph Street premises would be carried out on the assumption of an initial three year lifespan, with an assessment of the use of the facility being conducted 12 months after it opened to help consider the best way forward.

8 Costing and Funding

Where available, cost and funding information has been included in the main body of this report.

If the preferred option gains support then detailed costing and funding requirements will be addressed for the Telegraph Street One Stop Shop. The capital costs involved in bringing the premises up to One Stop Shop standards are not anticipated to be high, as the enhanced service offer is envisaged as being either internet based or involving minor works to open up the ground floor area.

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SHIPSTON ONE STOP SHOP PROJECT

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Bill Robinson (Acting Town Clerk – Shipston Town Council).

Susan Lewis (Stour Power)

Other

Clive Phillips (Head of Estates – Warwickshire Police)

Stour Community Forum 9th September 2008

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Delivery, advice and guidance on a range of services to include the following:

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|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Abandoned vehicles | Land Charges |
| Building Control | Licensing |
| Bus Passes | Nurseries and Schools |
| Bus Timetables | Parking |
| Business Rates | Parks and Open Spaces |
| CCTV | Pest Control |
| Childminders | PHILLIS |
| Composting | Planning Applications |
| Connexions | Recycling |
| Conservation | Refuse Collection |
| Council Tax | Registration Service |
| Council Tax Benefit | Rent Express Scheme |
| Councillor Information | Sandbags |
| Disabled Parking Badges | School Transport |
| Electoral Registration | Sport and Leisure |
| Food Safety | Street Cleansing |
| Free School Meals | Street Lighting |
| Graffiti | Student Finance |
| Grants | Tourist Information |
| Grass Cutting | Trading Standards |
| Highways | Tree Preservation |
| Homelessness | Vintage Services |
| Housing | Wood chipping |
| Housing Benefit | |

Shipston One Stop Shop Proposal – Socio-Economic Analysis

The purpose of this paper is to try to determine the potential size and service needs of the client group/s for a proposed one stop shop in Shipston.

In determining a potential catchment area for the one stop shop, and therefore the households and population to include within the analysis, a buffer zone, defined as equi-distance between Shipston (library) and Stratford-upon-Avon (Elizabeth House), was drawn around Shipston (as illustrated in Figure 1). The buffer zone equates to those households approximately 7.65 km from Shipston library. As well as those households within the buffer zone, several households outside the buffer zone were also included, such as those households to the south and east of the zone, whose alternative choice of one stop shop in Warwickshire is limited, and a small number were included to the north and north west so as to facilitate the use of statistical boundaries.

Resident Population

An estimate of population residing in the area shaded in Figure 1 was determined using a combination of 2005 mid year ward population estimates and 2001 Census Output Area estimates. Some 84% of the estimated population was derived from the 2005 population estimates.

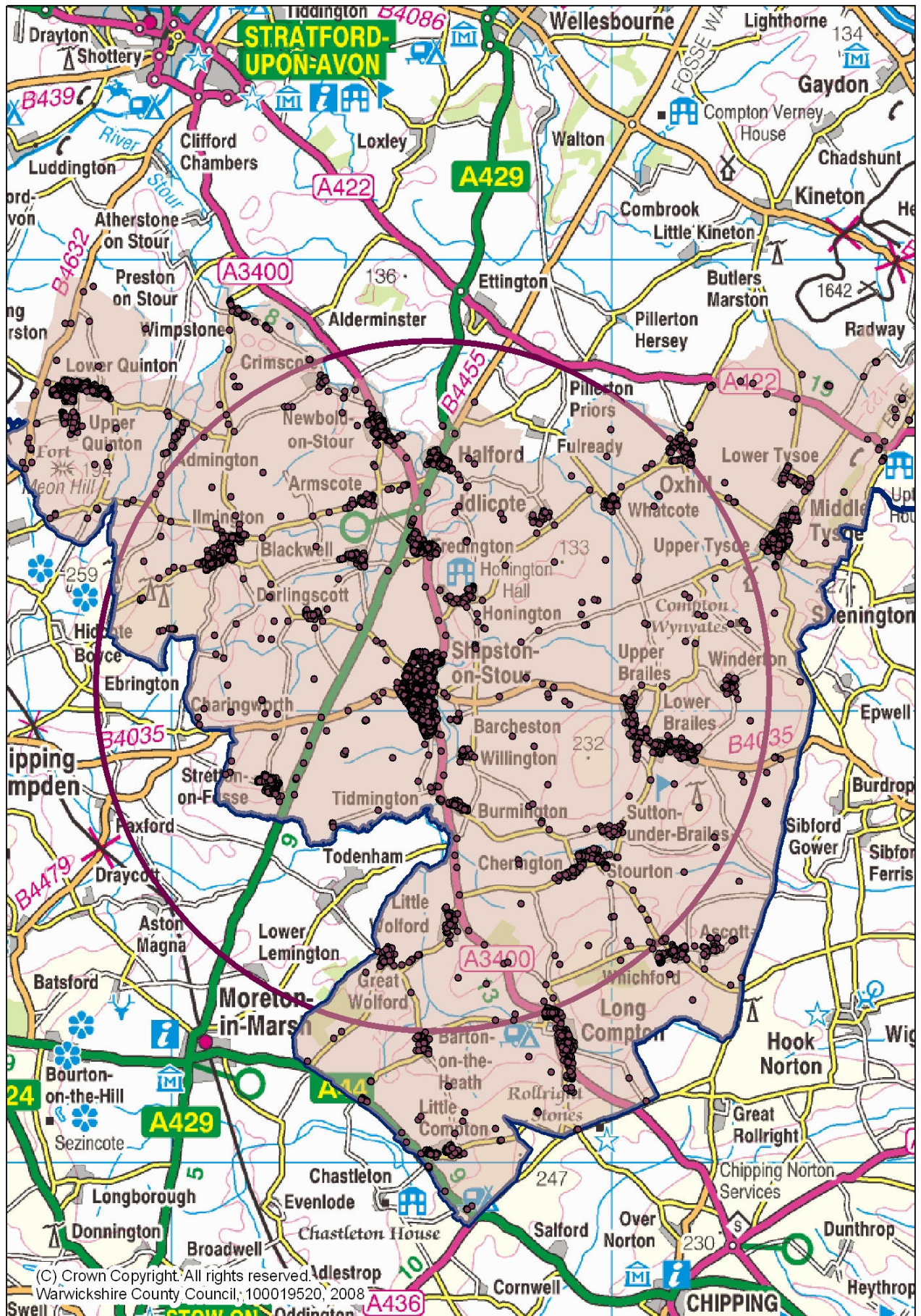
Table 1; Resident Population by Age, 2005

Age Group	Total	Male	Female
0-4	702	356	346
5-9	718	353	365
10-14	778	396	382
15-19	699	338	361
20-24	475	241	234
25-29	442	216	226
30-34	717	339	378
35-39	901	482	419
40-44	1,071	533	538
45-49	983	504	479
50-54	954	452	502
55-59	1,053	505	548
60-64	876	424	452
65-69	873	429	444
70-74	710	347	363
75-79	635	289	346
80-84	421	145	276
85+	315	108	207
All Ages*	13,343	6,457	6,866

* Age groups do not sum to total because of random adjustment of figures
Source: ONS 2005 mid year ward estimates and 2001 Census

- Some 16% of the resident population is aged 14 and under, similar to the County proportion of 17%
- An estimated 61% are of the ages 15 to 64, slightly under Warwickshire's 66%
- Just over one fifth (22%) of the population in the marked area is aged 65 and over, higher than Warwickshire's average of 17%.

Figure 1; Shipston One Stop Shop Potential Catchment Area



Experian's Mosaic Public Sector is a classification providing an insight into UK citizens and their socio demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour and can be used to provide a comprehensive view of citizens and their needs. Citizens are classified into 61 types which fall into 11 main groups.

Table 2 shows the number and proportion of households that are classified within each group for the Shipston area. Over a third of households fall into group K, containing people whose pattern of life is distinctively rural. However, 68% of this group are classified as well off commuters and retired people living in attractive country villages. The second most prominent group, with just under 18% of the total number of households in this area, is group J, consisting mostly of pensioners who own their homes and who have some source of income beyond their basic state pension. Within this group the most prominent 'type' is the more financially secure and physically active older people who have retired to this semi-rural location. Both groups J and K have a higher representation in this defined area than for Warwickshire as a whole, indicated by the Index figures. The proportion of the total number of households in Group K is five times greater in this Shipston area than for Warwickshire and over twice as high for Group J.

Table 2; Number of households in each mosaic group

Mosaic Public Sector Groups	Households	%	Index*
A: Career professionals living in sought after locations	822	13.0%	96
B: Younger families living in newer homes	408	6.4%	43
C: Older families living in suburbia	732	11.5%	64
D: Close-knit, inner city and manufacturing town communities	356	5.6%	34
E: Educated, young, single people living in areas of transient populations	45	0.7%	17
F: People living in social housing with uncertain employment in deprived areas	0	0.0%	0
G: Low income families living in estate based social housing	8	0.1%	4
H: Upwardly mobile families living in homes bought from social landlords	516	8.1%	85
I: Older people living in social housing with high care needs	24	0.4%	4
J: Independent older people with relatively active lifestyles	1132	17.8%	225
K: People living in rural areas far from urbanisation	2298	36.2%	557
U: Unclassified	5	0.1%	-
Total	6346	100.0%	-

Source: Experian (2007)

*Mosaic group representation in this customer area compared to the rest of Warwickshire. An index of 100 would equate to equal proportions

Using Mosaic it is also possible determine how each group prefers to acquire and communicate information. As shown in Table 3, just over 60% of the resident households in the area in and around Shipston prefer to use telephone advice lines and over half (56%) are likely to use the internet. The remoteness of several of these financially secure communities in this area lend to people, such as those comprising group K, utilizing the benefits of advancing technology, such as the internet.

Some 18% of resident households are more likely to want to communicate through face to face contact, and mainly comprise those households unreceptive to both telephone advice lines and the internet. However, these 1000 or so households are most likely to be found among Group J comprising those older people and pensioners making up a relatively large proportion of the daytime population.

Table 3; Preferred methods of communication

Communication method	Proportion of Households			Number of Households		
	Receptive	Neither Receptive nor Unreceptive	Unreceptive	Receptive	Neither Receptive nor Unreceptive	Unreceptive
Broadsheet Newspapers	79.2%	0.0%	20.7%	5029	0	1312
Telephone Advice Lines	61.4%	29.9%	8.6%	3897	1896	548
Internet	56.3%	17.1%	26.5%	3573	1088	1680
Heavy Weight Magazines	49.9%	35.8%	14.2%	3165	2272	904
Mid Market Tabloids	24.3%	67.4%	8.3%	1540	4277	524
Personal Contact	18.2%	81.7%	0.0%	1156	5185	0
Red Top Newspapers	13.7%	85.3%	0.8%	872	5416	53
TV	8.6%	12.7%	78.5%	548	809	4984
Telemarketing	8.3%	24.7%	67.0%	524	1565	4252
Posters/Leaflets	0.8%	20.5%	78.5%	53	1304	4984

Source: Experian (2007)

According to the Mosaic data, other households likely to be unreceptive to either the internet or telephone advice lines, and perhaps more likely to be in need of a service offering face to face contact, are in groups F, G, H and I. However, the Mosaic data would suggest that these four groups make up just 8% of the total number of households in the area specified.

Daytime Population

Population Type, 2001

Population	Count
Resident population aged 16-74	9430
Daytime population aged 16-74	7068
Workplace population aged 16-74	3979
Lives in area and works outside area but within Stratford on Avon District	1674
Lives in area and works outside Stratford on Avon District	2258
Lives and works in area	2408
Lives outside area but within Stratford on Avon District and works inside area	857
Lives outside Stratford-on-Avon District and works inside area	714
Lives in area and does not work	3089

Source: Census 2001

- In 2001, of the population aged 16-74 living in the area specified, 42% (3932) worked outside of the area. This comprised, just under a quarter (24%) working outside of Stratford on Avon District and 18% remaining in the District to work.
- Some 14% of the workplace population (8% of the day time population) commute into the area from outside the County, compared to just 2% commuting in from outside Stratford-on-Avon District but elsewhere in Warwickshire. However, 84% of the workforce commutes into the area from elsewhere in the District.

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