South Lakeland Business Premises Survey 2019
Analysis Report

November 2019 – January 2020

This report analyses the results of the South Lakeland Business Survey conducted via a self-completion and online survey carried out between 18 November 2019 and 31 January 2020.

Contents

Introduction

The South Lakeland Business Premises Survey was carried out by South Lakeland District Council.

The Business Premises Survey is carried out each year to help provide an up-to-date assessment of the supply and demand of business premises in South Lakeland. The survey helps to inform the South Lakeland local planning authorities evidence base about employment needs in so far as the supply and demand for land and premises and strategic policy about land requirements going forward in the Local Plan. The survey is also used to better understand the opportunities and challenges faced by businesses operating in South Lakeland.

Method

The Business Premises Survey was sent to 4,678 businesses on the South Lakeland Business Rates Register.

There was a press release to advertise the consultation on social media, South Lakeland News and the local press.

Businesses were able to complete a paper copy and return free of charge by post, or online using the link provided. 87% of completed surveys were returned by post.

Responses

There were **974** complete useable responses to the consultation. This represents a response rate of 21% of businesses that received the survey, **which is considered a statistically significant sample and can be considered representative**. A similar response rate was seen in the previous years' surveys.

Executive Summary

- A response rate of 21% can be considered statistically representative of the district as a whole. More than a quarter of businesses responding to the consultation are from Kendal or the surrounding area. There was, as usual, a good response rate from all parts of the district, including Ulverston and Windermere/ Bowness as well as the more rural towns and villages.
- There was also a good representation from businesses of all ages, from those trading for a reasonably short time (under 5 years) to those who have been operating for over 31 years.
- The vast majority of responses were from businesses in the wholesale/retail and hospitality/catering sectors, which is expected due to the nature of the South Lakeland economy.
- Limited companies, soles traders and partnerships were the main types of businesses responding to the survey.
- The majority of responding businesses are currently operating from retail outlets, while those in offices, food/drink and residential (hotels, B&Bs etc.) premises also contributed a significant response rate.
- The majority of responding businesses are operating from premises in a town centre location, however businesses on the edge of town and in more rural locations are also well represented. There was a good response rate from businesses that have occupied their current premises for a relatively short time to those that have been at the same premises for over 31 years.
- The majority of respondents classed their premises as their main workplace/headquarters. Almost half indicated that their floor space was under 2,500 ft^2, and two thirds employed between 1 to 5 employees. This shows that the majority of responses were from small businesses.
- This year's survey asked businesses what their current broadband speed is, and there was a fairly even share of download speeds throughout the district.
- Three quarters of respondents feel confident about the next twelve months, with the majority expecting their staffing levels to stay the same. There are more businesses expecting their staffing levels to increase (15%) than decrease (5%).
- Of the 974 responding businesses, 18% (174 businesses) indicated that they would expect their premises needs to change in the next 3 years. The majority expect to increase in size by means of expanding their existing premises or moving to a larger site.
- The majority of those looking for new premises would do so either in a town centre or edge of town (e.g. industrial estate) location, with Kendal being the most likely location.
- The most likely types of premises these businesses would be looking for are retail and office units. Two fifths of respondents would prefer a premises under 2,500ft^2, while just over a third would prefer something slightly larger (2,501 – 9,999ft^2).

- All responding businesses feel that the cost of premises, location/accessibility of premises, and access to customers were very important factors to consider when choosing a new premises.
- Just under one in five businesses identify staffing and business rates as obstacles which prevent their business growing.
- A new question to this year's survey asked businesses how they were seeking to address climate change issues. Two in five business are doing so by implementing energy efficiency measures, while one in five are utilising green technologies.
- Respondents were given the opportunity to leave any other comments. The main comments/issues relate to parking, business rates, transport/infrastructure and ways in which the council could support/assist their business.
- The rate of businesses expecting their premises needs to change over the next 3 years is the same as last year's survey, however there is a slight increase in the proportion who would expect to move premises to achieve this. Kendal is the likeliest place they would look, however compared to last year the proportion of businesses who would look here has reduced by 10%.

Company information

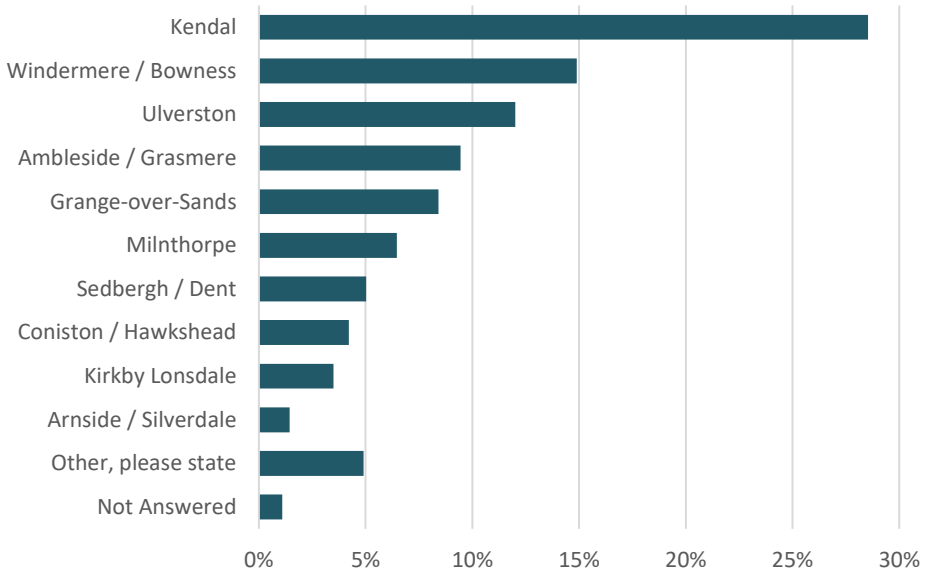
Question 1: What is the name of the business operating from these premises?

Answers to this question have been collected, however under the terms of the Data Protection Legislation this data is not included in the analysis report or appendix.

Question 2: Which is the nearest town/village to these premises?

More than a quarter of responses are from businesses located in or around Kendal. Windermere/Bowness (15%) and Ulverston (12%) were the other two most well represented towns/areas, as would be expected. When looking at the number of responses from the other towns/areas in relation to their size, it can be said that there has been a good response rate from all parts of the district. Staveley and Broughton-in-Furness were the most common 'Other' responses. These answers can be viewed in full in Appendix 1 (available upon request).

When compared to previous years' surveys, apart from the response rate from Ulverston based businesses being slightly down (-3%), there has not been any significant variations in relation to where responses have been received from.

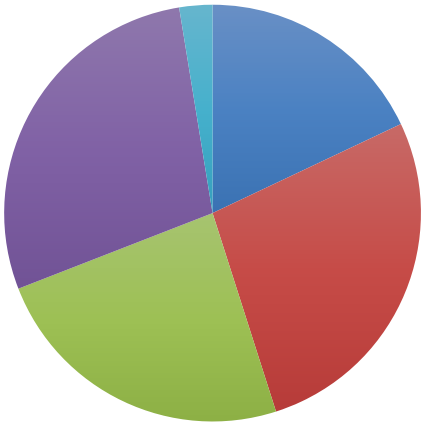


Nearest Area	Total	%	Nearest Area	Total	%
Kendal	278	28.5	**Sedbergh/Dent**	49	5.0
Windermere/Bowness	145	14.9	**Coniston/Hawkshead**	41	4.2
Ulverston	117	12.0	**Kirkby Lonsdale**	34	3.5
Ambleside/Grasmere	92	9.5	**Arnside/Silverdale**	14	1.4
Grange-over-Sands	82	8.4	**Other, please state**	48	4.9
Milnthorpe	63	6.5	**Not Answered**	11	1.1

Question 3: How long has this business been trading?

There was a fairly even response rate from businesses of all ages, with those trading for over 31 years providing the slight majority (28%). Businesses trading for 6-15 and 16-30 years provided around a quarter of responses each, while just under one in five were from those trading for less than five years.

There has been a fairly even response rate from businesses of all ages in previous years too.



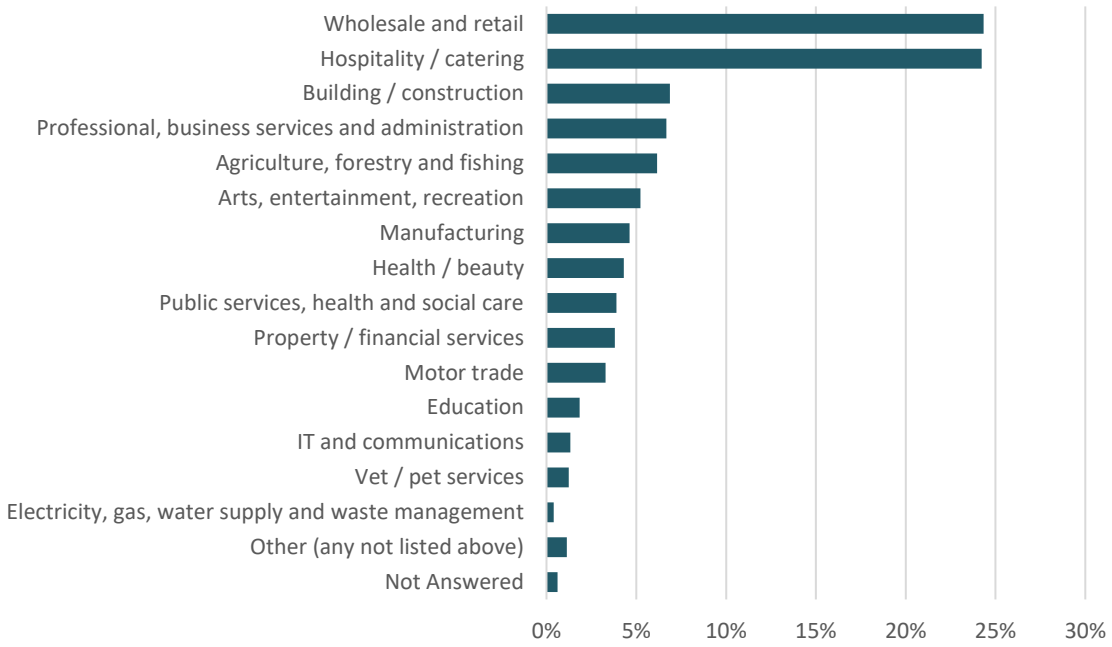
Years Trading	Total	%
0-5 years	175	18.0
6-15 years	264	27.1
16-30 years	234	24.0
Over 31 years	276	28.3
Not Answered	25	2.6

Question 4: Which of the following is the main operation of your business?

Responding businesses were given a list of 15 broad industry groups (and examples) to indicate which sector their business operated in. The majority (89%) chose one of the listed groups, with the remaining choosing to use the 'Other' option. For analytical purposes, these have been added to the main business groups (e.g. Caravan Park has been added to the hospitality/catering sector).

Unsurprisingly, due to the nature of the economy in South Lakeland the vast majority of responses (both contributing 24%) were from businesses operating in the wholesale/retail and hospitality/catering sectors. Businesses operating in these two sectors have contributed the most responses to the survey each year, with this year's response rate from these sectors being very similar to last year's.

When looking at the response rates from the other sectors in comparison with last year, there has been slight increases from those in the agricultural (+3%) and construction sectors (+2%), and a slight decrease from those in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (-2%).

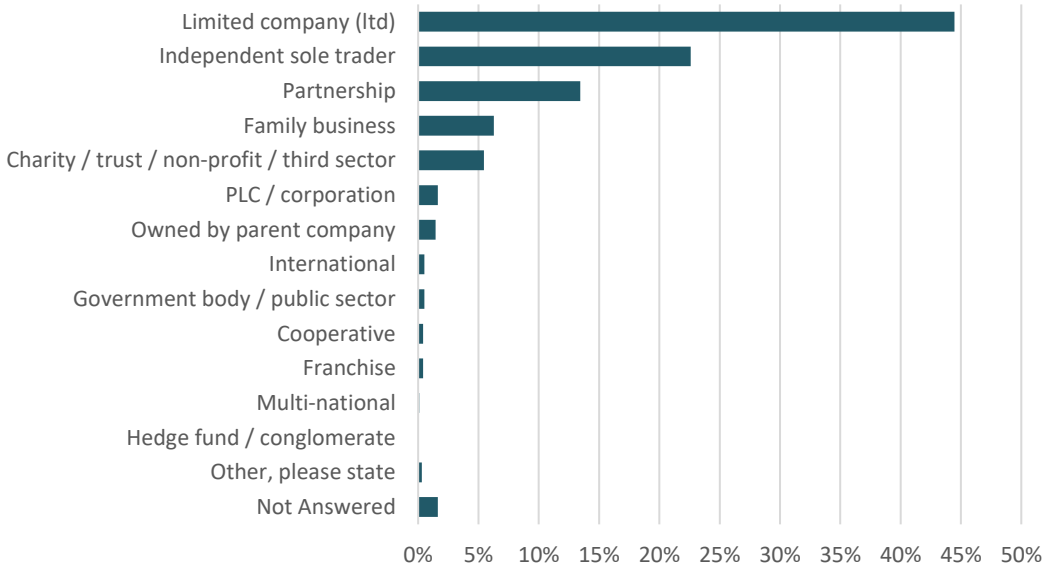


Business Sector	Total	%
Wholesale and retail *(Inc. shops, wholesale distribution, indoor market, petrol station, garden centre, storage)*	237	24.3
Hospitality/catering *(Inc. holiday let, hotel, B&B, pub, laundrette)*	236	24.2
Building/construction *(Inc. builder, roofer, joiner, electrician)*	67	6.9
Professional, business services and administration *(Inc. solicitor, architect, designer)*	65	6.7
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	60	6.2
Arts, entertainment, recreation *(Inc. gallery, gym, sports club, leisure centre)*	51	5.2
Manufacturing *(Inc. quarrying)*	45	4.6
Health/beauty *(Inc. hairdresser, spa, nail salon)*	42	4.3
Public services, health and social care *(Inc. doctors surgery, optician, dentist, health centre, charity, rescue service, nursing home)*	38	3.9
Property/financial services *(Inc. private letting, estate agent, bank, accountant)*	37	3.8
Motor trade *(Inc. garage, auto dealer)*	32	3.3
Education *(Inc. training)*	18	1.9
IT and Communications	13	1.3
Vet/Pet Services *(Inc. animal care, animal grooming, animal rescue, boarding kennels)*	12	1.2
Electricity, gas, water supply, waste management *(Inc. recycling, biomass)*	4	0.4
Other	11	1.1
Not Answered	6	0.6

Question 5: What type of business/organisation are you?

The majority of responding businesses (45%) are limited companies (ltd), while just under a quarter are independent sole traders. There was also a reasonable response from partnerships (14%), family businesses (6%) and third sector (5%)

Compared to last year's survey, there was a slight decrease in responses from the third sector (-2%).



Business Type	Total	%
Limited company (ltd)	433	44.5
Independent sole trader	220	22.6
Partnership	131	13.5
Family business	61	6.3
Charity/ trust/ non-profit/ third sector	53	5.4
PLC/ corporation	16	1.6
Owned by parent company	14	1.4
International	5	0.5
Government body/ publicly owned	5	0.5
Cooperative	4	0.4
Franchise	4	0.4
Multi-national	1	0.1
Hedge Fund/ conglomerate	0	0.0
Other, please state	3	0.3
Not Answered	16	1.6

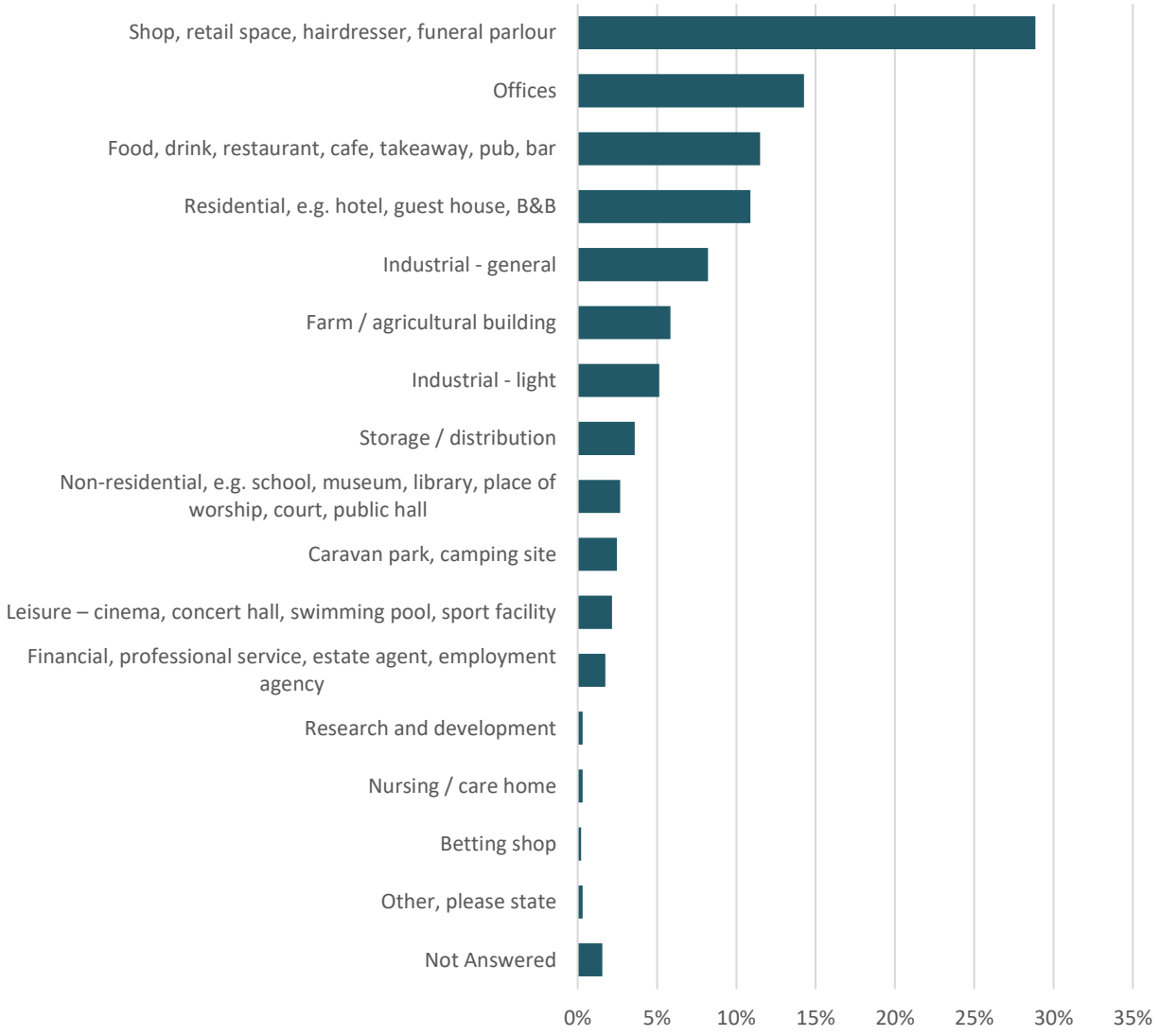
Existing business premises

Question 6: Which of the following best describes the type of premises you occupy?

As with question 4, the majority of respondents (91%) chose one of the listed business premises types, while 7% chose 'other, please state'. For analytical purposes, these responses have been added to the listed premises types where applicable (e.g. dental surgery has been added to Non-residential).

Businesses operating from a retail type premises contributed the most responses to the survey, over a quarter of the total. There was also a good response rate from businesses operating in; Offices (14%), food and drink (12%), Residential (11%), and general industrial (8%) type premises.

In comparison to last year's survey, there has been a slight increase in the response rate from agricultural (+3%), retail (+2%) and food and drink (+2%) type premises. There has been a slight decrease from those in non-residential (-2%) type premises.



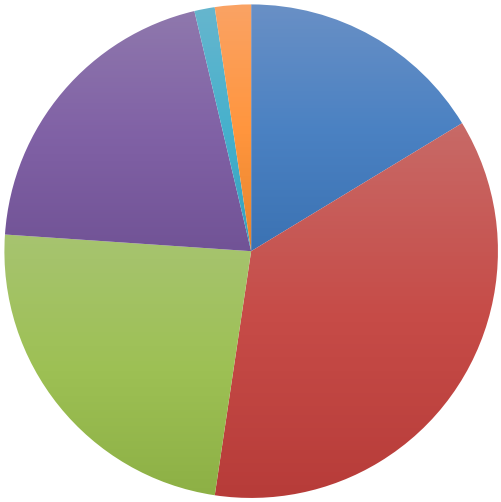
Business Sector	Total	%
Shop, retail space, hairdresser, funeral parlour	281	28.9
Offices	139	14.3
Food, drink, restaurant, cafe, takeaway, pub, bar	112	11.5
Residential, e.g. hotel, guest house, B&B	106	10.9
Industrial - general	80	8.2
Farm / agricultural building	57	5.9
Industrial - light	50	5.1
Storage / distribution	35	3.6
Non-residential, e.g. school, museum, library, place of worship, court, public hall	26	2.7
Caravan park, camping site	24	2.5
Leisure – cinema, concert hall, swimming pool, sport facility	21	2.2
Financial, professional service, estate agent, employment agency	17	1.8
Research and development	3	0.3
Nursing / care home	3	0.3
Betting shop	2	0.2
Other, please state	3	0.3
Not Answered	15	1.5

Question 7: Which best describes the location of these premises?

Over a third of responding businesses are based in a town centre location, which links to the majority response rate from businesses in the retail and hospitality sector and those based in office type premises. Just under a quarter are located in a village, one in five based in a rural location and one in six on the edge of town. This highlights that there has been a fairly even response rate from the different types of locations within South Lakeland.

As with previous questions, for those that answered 'other', their responses were added to the main options where possible. The ones remaining were form businesses located in residential areas.

Compared to last year's survey, there has been a slight decrease in the rate of responses from businesses in edge of town locations (-4%). The response rate from businesses in the other locations are all very similar to those seen in last year's survey.

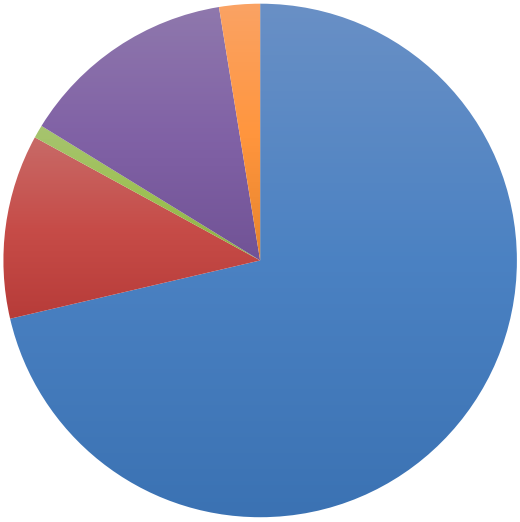


Premises Location	Total	%
Edge of town e.g. industrial estate	162	16.3
Town centre	362	36.0
Village	231	23.7
Rural	200	20.2
Other, please state	5	1.3
Not Answered	14	2.4

Question 8: Which of the following best describes these premises?

The overall majority of responding businesses describe their premises as their main workspace or headquarters, with almost three out of four doing so. One in seven best describies their premises as a live/work unit, while one in nine are operating from a branch premises. Respondents were able to answer 'other', but for analytical purposes all of these answers were able to be added to one of the listed options.

Compared to last year's survey, there was a slight reduction (-3%) in the response rate from main workplaces, while there was a slight increase (+3%) from those operating in live / work units and branch premises (+2%).

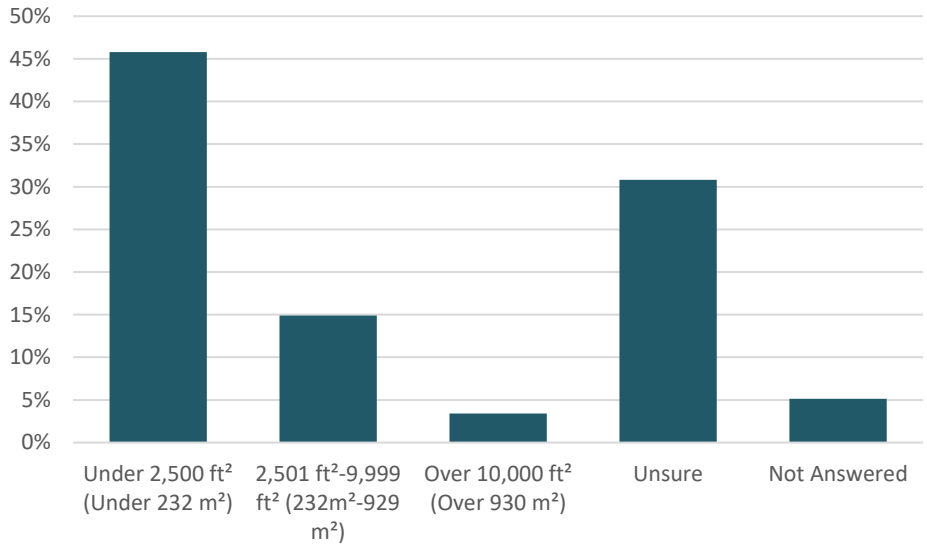


Premises description	Total	%
Main workplace / headquarters	695	73.4
Branch	113	11.6
Office at home	8	0.8
Live / work unit	133	13.7
Not Answered	25	2.6

Question 9: What is the approximate floor space of these premises?

Just under half of responding businesses are operating in 'small' premises with an approximate floor space of under 2,500 ft², while there was a reasonable response rate (15%) from businesses operating in 'medium' sized premises between 2,501 and 9,999 ft². Just 3% are located in a 'large' premises with an approx. floor space over 10,000 ft². Almost a third of respondents (31%) are unsure of the size of their floor space.

There has been a slight decrease in the response rate from those in 'small' and 'large' premises (both -2%) compared to last year's results. Unfortunately this seems to be down to an increase in those unsure and those not answering the question.



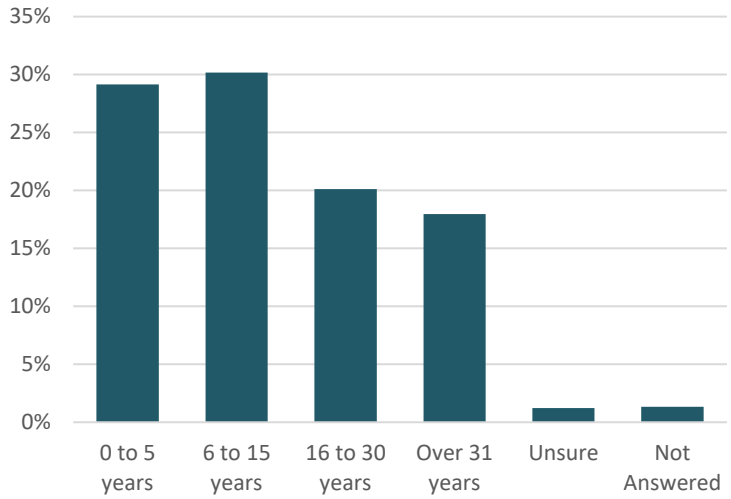
Approx. floor space	Total	%
Under 2,500 ft² (Under 232m²)	446	45.8
2,501 ft²-9,999 ft² (233m²-929m²)	145	14.9
Over 10,000 ft² (Over 930m²)	33	3.4
Unsure	300	30.8
Not Answered	50	5.1

Question 10: How long have you been at these premises?

There was a good response rate from businesses that have occupied their current premises for a relatively short time (29%) to those that have frequented their premises for over 31 years (18%). Just under a third have been at their premises for 6-15 years, with one in five indicating they have been at theirs for between 16 and 30 years.

As has been the case in previous years' surveys, it is interesting to note that in rural areas and villages there is a higher response rate (29%) from business that have occupied the same property for more than 31 years, whereas in more urban areas it is far lower (8%). At the same time the opposite is true in terms of businesses that have operated from their current premises for a short time (1-5 years), with 35% of urban businesses doing so compared to 22% of rural businesses.

The response rate from businesses occupying their current premises for less than five years has decreased slightly (-3%) on last year's results, while the rate from those that have been in theirs for 6-15 years has slightly increased (+3%). The response rate from those in the same occupancy for over 16 years is the same as last year's results.

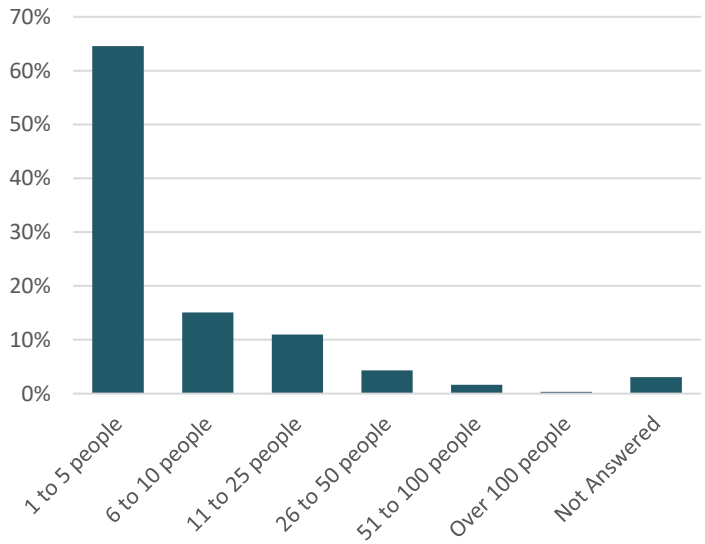


Years	Total	%
0 to 5 years	284	29.2
6 to 15 years	294	30.2
16 to 30 years	196	20.1
Over 31 years	175	18.0
Unsure	12	1.2
Not Answered	13	1.3

Question 11: How many people work at these premises?

Almost two thirds of responses were from businesses that employ between 1 and 5 staff at their premises, while 15% currently have between 6 and 15 employees. This, along with results from previous questions, indicates that the majority of responders to the survey are likely to be small businesses and sole traders. However there was still a reasonable response rate from larger businesses, and overall the share of responses is fairly representative of the South Lakeland economy overall.

A similar picture has been seen in previous years' surveys.

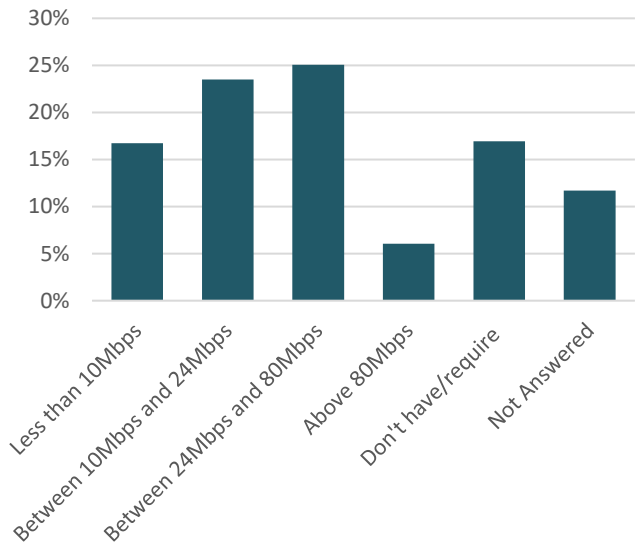


Employees	Total	%
1 to 5 people	646	64.6
6 to 10 people	147	14.7
11 to 25 people	110	11.0
26 to 50 people	41	4.1
51 to 100 people	10	1.0
Over 100 people	9	0.9
Not Answered	37	3.7

Question 12: What is your current broadband speed?

Just under a quarter of responding businesses have a current broadband speed of between 10-24Mbps, while one in five have between 24-80Mbps. One in six are currently running below 10Mbps, with a similar rate stating they don't have or require business broadband.

This is a new question to the 2019 survey, replacing the question that simply asked whether businesses were happy with their current broadband speed in previous years' surveys.

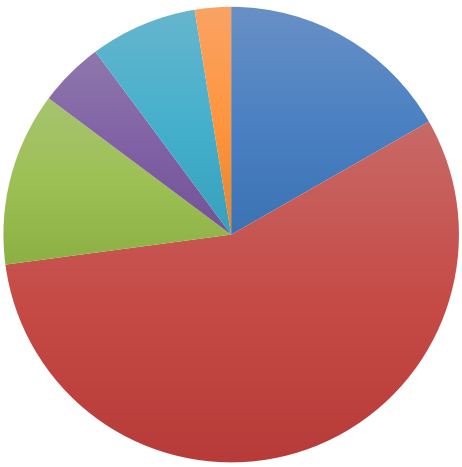


Current broadband speed	Total	%
Less than 10Mbps	163	16.7
Between 10Mbps and 24Mbps	229	23.5
Between 24Mbps and 80Mbps	244	20.1
Above 80Mbps	59	6.1
Don't have/ require business broadband	165	16.9
Not Answered	114	11.7

Going forward

Question 13: How confident do you feel about the next twelve months?

Over half of all responding businesses feel fairly confident about the next 12 months, while one in six are very confident. On the other hand 17% are either not very or not at all confident. This shows that the majority of businesses responding to the survey are confident about the year ahead, which was also the case in last year's survey.

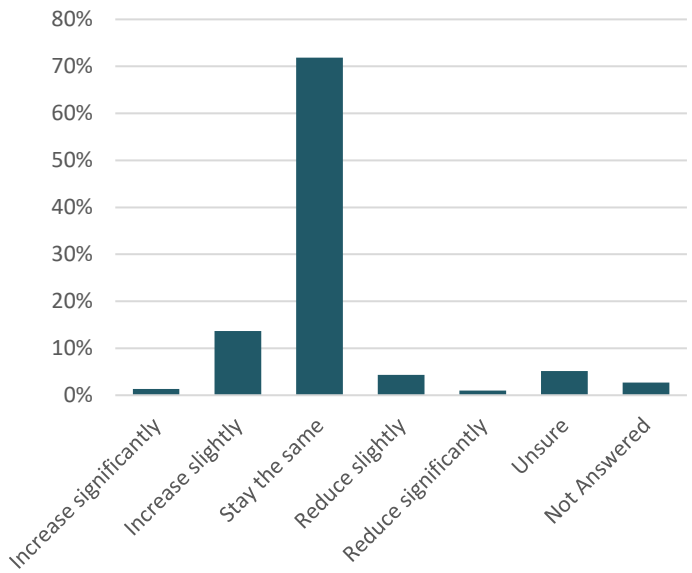


Confidence	Total	%
Very confident	163	16.7
Fairly confident	547	56.2
Not very confident	120	12.3
Not at all confident	45	4.6
Unsure	74	7.6
Not Answered	25	2.6

Question 14: Over the next year, do you expect the number of people employed at these premises to…?

The overall majority, just under three quarters, expect the number of people employed at their premises to stay the same over the next year. One in seven businesses expect their employee numbers to slightly increase, while there are 13 businesses that expect their numbers to increase significantly. One the other hand, 4% expect employee numbers to reduce slightly, while there are 10 businesses that expect theirs to reduce significantly.

Comparted to last year's survey, there has been a slight decrease (-3%) in the rate of businesses expecting employee numbers to increase slightly, while there is an increase of the same rate expecting it to stay the same.



No. Employed	Total	%
Increase significantly (more than 25%)	13	1.3
Increase slightly	133	13.7
Stay the same	700	71.9
Reduce slightly	42	4.3
Reduce significantly (more than 25%)	10	1.0
Unsure	50	5.1
Not Answered	26	2.7

Question 15: How do you expect your premises/business needs to change over the next three years?

A total of 174 responding businesses (18% of the total) are expecting their premises/business needs to change over the next three years. These respondents were then able to identify all the ways in which they expect their needs to change. 37% of those anticipating change would consider expanding their existing site, 30% would look at moving to a larger site, while 15% may acquire additional premises to satisfy their need to change.

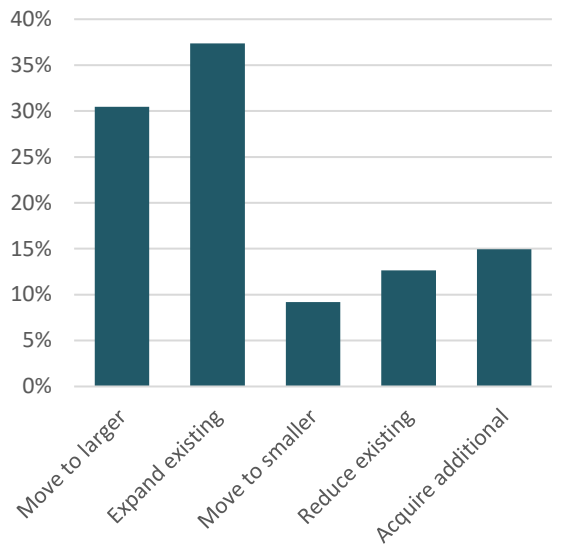
On the other hand, 13% would consider reducing the size/capacity of their current premises while 9% may move to a smaller premises. This shows that overall there is a greater desire to increase premises size or capacity rather than reducing it in the district overall.

The rate of total respondents expecting their premises/business needs to change over the next three years is the same as the rate seen in last year's survey results.

When comparing the types of expected change with last year's results; the rate that would consider expanding on their existing site has reduced (-4%), reducing the size of their existing premises has reduced (-4%), and acquiring additional premises has increased (+3%).

The remaining 800 responding businesses (82% of the total) indicated that they do not anticipate any change in their premises/business need over the next three years.

Those who expect no change were asked to skip to question 22. The analysis in the next six questions is focussed on those who expect a need to change over the next three years.



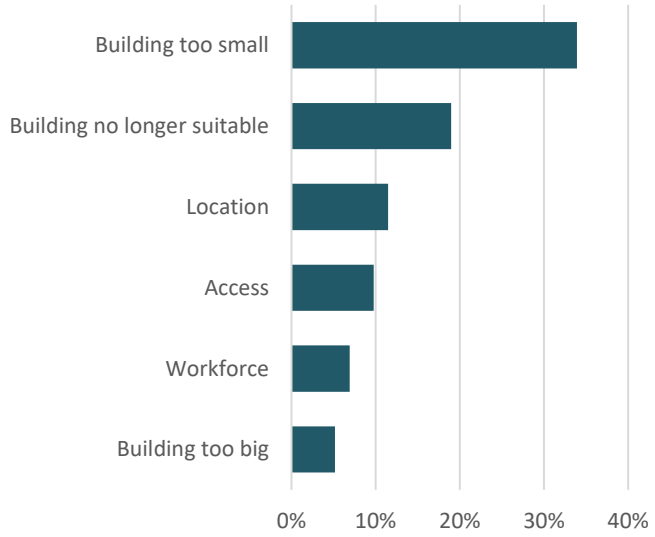
Change of premises needs	Total	%
Move to larger site	53	30.5
Expand existing site	65	37.4
Move to smaller site	16	9.2
Reduce existing site size	22	12.6
Acquire additional premises	26	14.9
Total Responses	174	17.9

Question 16: Why are you planning to change or adapt your premises?

Those who are expecting their premises/business needs to change were asked why this is the case, and could answer all options that applied to them. A third stated that it was because their current premises/building is too small, one in five said that their building is no longer suitable, while location and access were reasons for one in ten responding businesses.

There were 54 'Other' reasons given. The main themes coming from the comments are; a desire to expand/ develop and improve facilities, the cost of current facilities and reduced custom. These comments can be viewed in full in Appendix 1 (available upon request).

A similar picture was evident when comparing to last year's surveys results.



Reason for change	Total	%
Building too small	59	33.9
Building no longer suitable, e.g. outdated	33	19.0
Location	20	11.5
Access	17	9.8
Workforce	12	6.9
Building too big	9	5.2

Question 17: Where are you likely to look for new premises?

When focusing on the businesses who would expect to move rather than alter/adapt their current premises (91 in total, 52% of the total that expect their needs to change over the next three years), over a third would be likely to look in Kendal. Ulverston, Ambleside/ Grasmere and Windermere/ Bowness were the other most popular locations. Of those that answered 'other', there were various locations mentioned. These can be viewed in Appendix 1(available upon request).

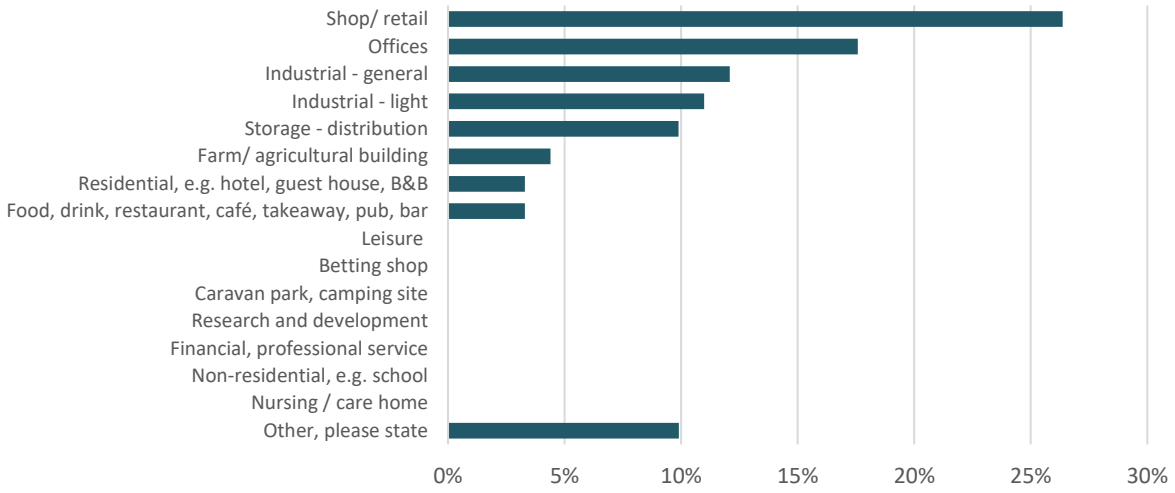
There has been a 4% increase in the rate of businesses that would expect to move premises in the next 3 years compared to last year's survey. Kendal has unsurprisingly been the most popular location businesses would be likely to look for new premises if they were to move in previous years' surveys. However when comparing to last year's survey, there has been a decrease in the rate of respondents who'd look in Kendal (-11%).

Location	Total	%	Location	Total	%
Kendal	34	37.4	**Grange over Sands**	6	6.6
Ulverston	12	13.2	**Arnside / Silverdale**	3	3.3
Ambleside / Grasmere	10	11.0	**Coniston / Hawkshead**	3	3.3
Windermere / Bowness	9	9.9	**Sedbergh / Dent**	3	3.3
Kirkby Lonsdale	8	8.8	**Other, please state**	12	13.3
Milnthorpe	7	7.7			

Question 18: Which of the following best describes the type of premises you would be looking for?

When focusing on the same 91 businesses who'd expect to look for new premises in the next three years, shops/retail space (26%), offices (18%) and industrial (both general and light) are the types of premises that the majority of these businesses would be looking for. Those that answered 'Other' can be view in Appendix 1 (available upon request).

When comparing to last year's survey, there has been a decrease in the rate of businesses who'd be looking for office premises (-9%), and slight increases in those looking for light industrial (+5%) and general industrial (+4%).



Premises type	Total	%
Shop, retail space, hairdresser, funeral parlour	24	26.4
Offices	16	17.6
Industrial – general	11	12.1
Industrial - light	10	10.1
Storage / distribution	9	9.9
Farm / agricultural building	4	4.4
Residential e.g. hotel, guest house, B&B	3	3.3
Food, drink, restaurant, café, takeaway, pub, bar	3	3.3
Leisure e.g. cinema, concert hall, swimming pool, sport facility	0	0.0
Betting shop	0	0.0
Caravan park / camping site	0	0.0
Research and development	0	0.0
Financial, professional service, estate agent, employment agent	0	0.0
Non-residential e.g. school, museum, library, place of worship, court, public hall	0	0.0
Nursing / care home	0	0.0
Other, please state	9	9.9

Question 19: What type of premises ownership would you be looking for?

Two fifths of businesses who expect to acquire new premises in the next three years would be looking for either freehold or leasehold. One in four would prefer freehold, while slightly more would prefer Leasehold.

Compared to last year's survey there has been an increase (+9%) in the rate of businesses looking for leasehold premises and a 10% reduction looking for either.

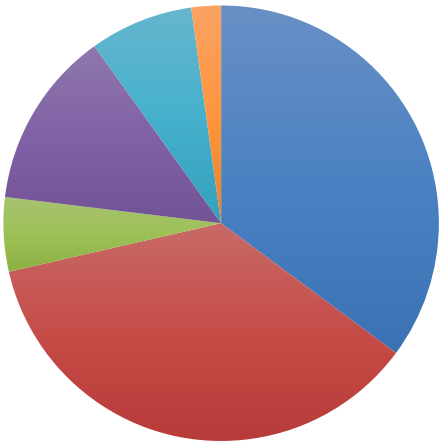
Ownership	Total	%
Freehold	23	25.3
Leasehold	25	27.5
Either freehold or leasehold	36	39.6
Not Answered	7	7.7

Question 20: Which best describes the location you would look for?

The most likely location these businesses would look for a new premises would be either the edge of town or town centre, with over a third choosing one of these options. Just 13% would look in a rural area and 6% in a village. Those that answered 'Other' can be view in Appendix 1 (available upon request).

Over previous years, town centre locations have been the preferred area to look for new premises. However in recent years there has been an increase in the proportion of businesses that would

prefer to be located on the edge of town, with both locations now having a very similar rate of response. When compared to last year's results there has little change to this trend.

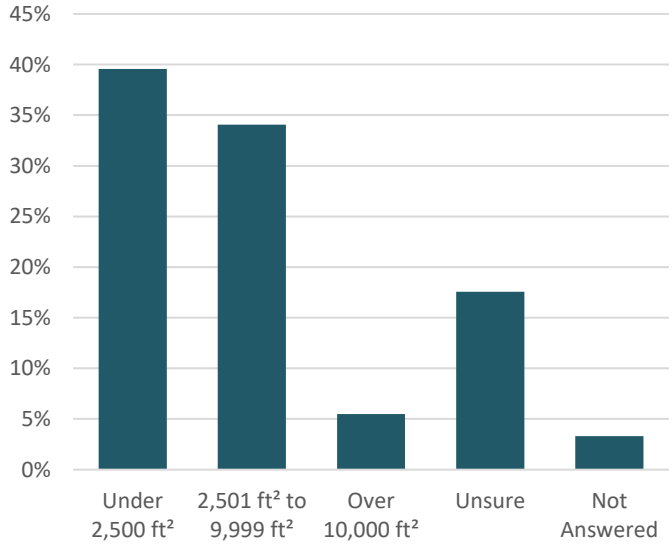


Location	Total	%
Town centre	32	35.2
Edge of town, e.g. industrial estate	33	36.3
Village	5	5.5
Rural	12	13.2
Other, please state	7	7.7
Not Answered	2	2.2

Question 21: What is the approx. floor space of the premises you would be looking for?

Small size premises (under 2,500ft²) are the most desired sized for those who may be looking for a new premises, with 40% preferring this size. However there is also demand for medium sized premises (2,501ft²-9,999ft²) with 34% preferring this size. Just 5 businesses would be looking for a large premises over 10,000ft², while 18% were unsure.

Compared to last year's survey there has been slight increases in the rate of businesses looking for small (+2%) and medium sized (+3%) premises, and a reduction (-11%) in those looking for large premises (this is partly due to a +5% increase in the proportion that are unsure).



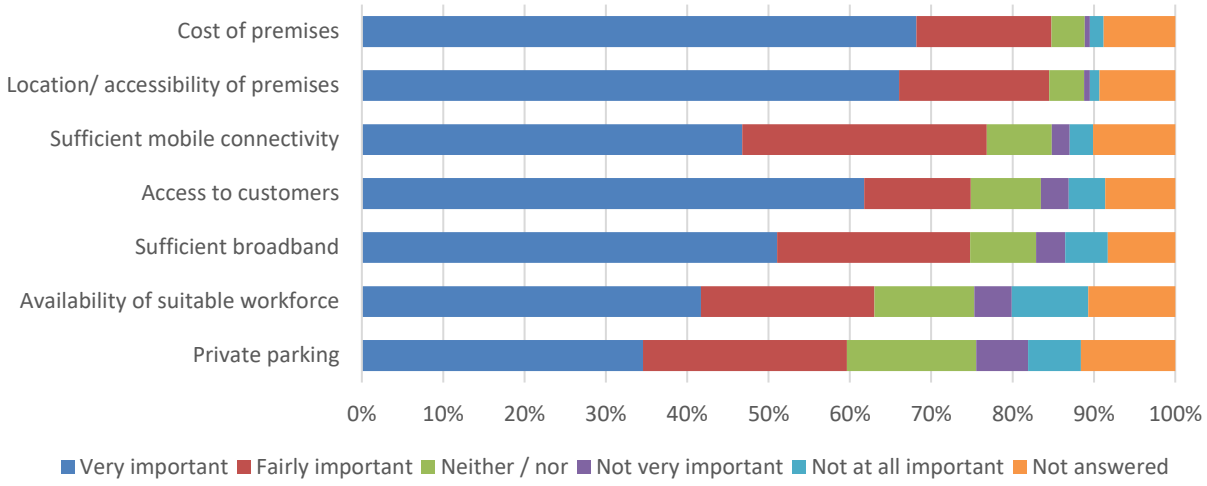
Reason for change	Total	%
Under 2,500ft² (under 232m²)	36	39.6
2,501ft²-9,999ft² (233m²-929m²)	31	34.1
Over 10,000ft² (over 930m²)	5	5.5
Unsure	16	17.6
Not Answered	3	3.3

Question 22: When choosing premises, how important are the following for your business/ organisation?

The most important factors to all businesses that responded to the survey when choosing premises are; cost of premises (85% very/fairly important), location/accessibility of premises (84%), sufficient mobile connectivity (77%), access to customers (75%) and sufficient broadband (75%).

Although availability of suitable workforce (63%) and private parking (60%) are still seen as important to the majority of respondents, they are slightly less so.

This question has been slightly altered for this year's survey, with the removal of three factors that were regularly seen as less important when choosing premises, and the addition of a new factor (sufficient mobile connectivity). Of those that remain, and in terms of the most important factors, the results are fairly similar to last year's survey.



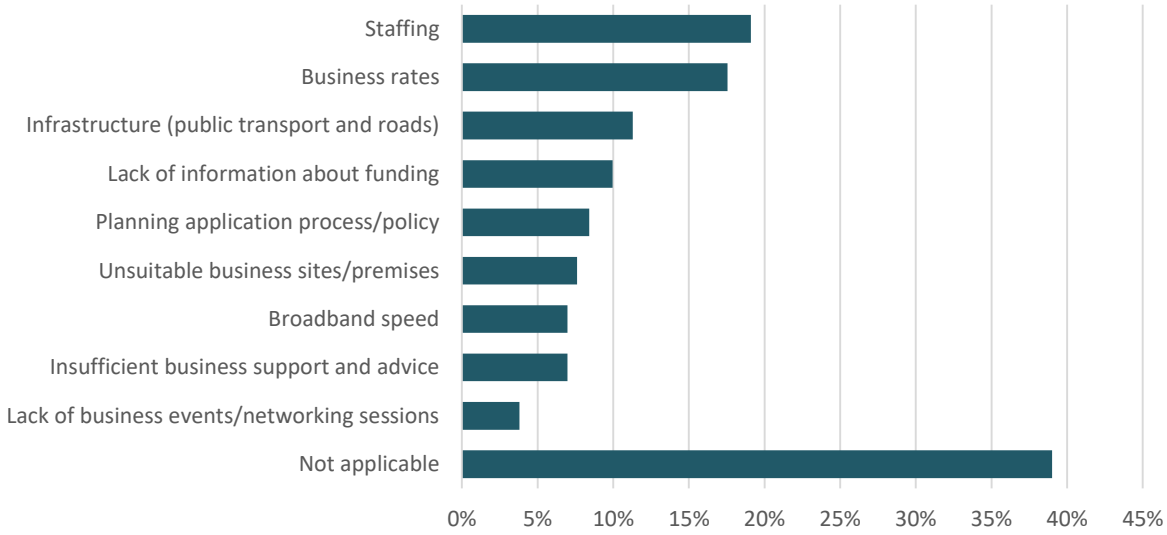
Factor	Very important		Fairly important		Neither / nor		Not very important		Not at all important		Not Answered	
Cost of premises	663	68.1	162	16.6	40	4.1	6	0.6	17	1.7	86	8.8
Location/ accessibility of premises	643	66.0	179	18.4	42	4.3	7	0.7	12	1.2	91	9.3
Access to customers	601	61.7	128	13.1	84	8.6	33	3.4	44	4.5	84	8.6
Sufficient broadband	497	51.0	231	23.7	79	8.1	35	3.6	51	5.2	81	8.3
Sufficient mobile connectivity	456	46.8	293	30.1	78	8.0	21	2.2	28	2.9	98	10.1
Availability of suitable workforce	406	41.7	207	21.3	120	12.3	45	4.6	92	9.4	104	10.7
Private parking	337	34.6	244	25.1	155	15.9	62	6.4	63	6.5	113	11.6

Question 23: Are there any obstacles which prevent your business growing?

This is a new question to the 2019 survey, and the majority of responding businesses (39%) indicated that it was not applicable to them. However for those that felt that it was, they were able to identify all options that applied to them. The two biggest obstacles to businesses are staffing (19%) and

business rates (18%). Around one in ten were also negatively affected by infrastructure and a lack of information about funding.

Respondents were also able to give 'Other' obstacles which prevent their business from growing, with 118 doing so. The majority of the comments simply stated Cumbria as being an obstacle, while parking was also mentioned a number of times. All comments to this question can be viewed in Appendix 1 (available upon request).



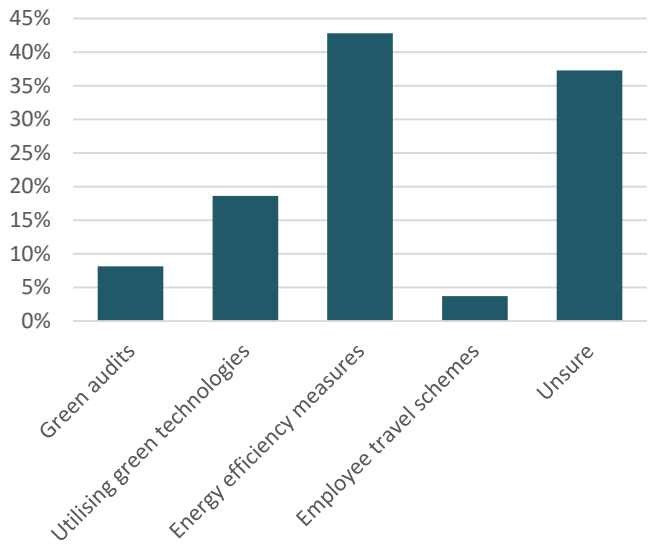
Obstacle	Total	%
Staffing	186	19.1
Business rates	171	17.6
Infrastructure (public transport and roads)	110	11.3
Lack of information about funding	97	9.7
Planning application process/ policy	82	8.4
Unsuitable business sites/ premises	74	7.6
Broadband speed	68	7.0
Insufficient business support and advice	68	7.0
Lack of business events/ networking sessions	37	3.8
Not Applicable	380	39.0

Question 24: How are you seeking to address climate change issues in your business?

This is a new question to the 2019 survey, and respondents were able to identify all options that applied to them. More than two out of five businesses are seeking to address climate change issues by implementing energy efficiency measures, while one in five are utilising green technologies. 8% undergo green audits, while just 4% have employee travel schemes. Over a third of respondents indicated that they weren't sure how they were addressing the issues.

Respondents were also able to give 'Other' examples, with 73 doing so. The majority of comments stated that they were addressing climate change issues by recycling. Reducing waste and packaging

were other methods mentioned by a number of businesses. All comments to this question can be viewed in Appendix 1 (available upon request).



Apprenticeship interest	Total	%
Green audits	79	8.1
Utilising green technologies	181	18.6
Energy efficiency measures	417	42.8
Employee travel schemes	36	3.7
Unsure	363	37.3

Question 25: Do you have any other comments?

Finally, responding businesses were given the opportunity to submit any other comments they have, with a total of 123 doing so. For analytical purposes they have been grouped into similar 'themes', with a brief overview of the main points highlighted below. All comments can be viewed in full in Appendix 1 (available upon request).

Parking

The issues around parking again generated the most feedback from businesses. Numerous respondents feel that parking fees are too high, which is having a detrimental effect on their business. The introduction of different 'schemes' was highlighted as a way of dealing with this (e.g. reduced fares for locals/businesses, reduced tariffs at various car parks/times of day).

Business Rates

As well as parking, the other main theme coming from the comments was around business rates, with many feeling that they need to be reduced. Business rate relief was praised by those that receive it, but there was also some concerns at how it is distributed.

Transport/infrastructure

The issues with public transport, especially in rural areas, was highlighted by a number of businesses. The lack of bus services and the recent issues with train services was raised, and the traffic problems that exist in Kendal. Regarding infrastructure, the state and maintenance of the roads were the main issues.

Information/advice/assistance

There were a number of comments relating to how the council can best help businesses, with many stating that they would appreciate assistance with various areas of their businesses. These include getting help in accessing funding/grants and how networking and events would aid business growth.

Town Centre / high streets

The town centre economy, and the state of the high street was another theme to come out of the comments. The majority seemed to be focused on Kendal in particular.

Other themes identified in the comments include; green issues, problems with the planning application process, the lack of appropriate workforce and a need for more affordable housing.