



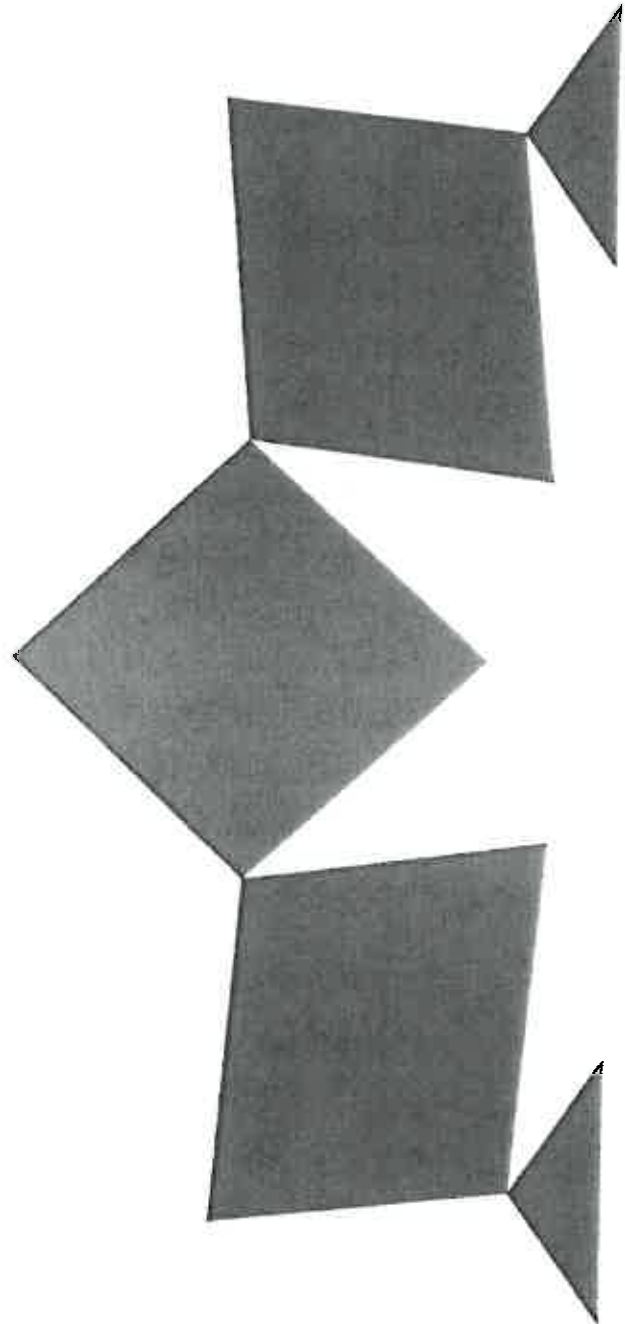
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research

Derbyshire Dales Business Survey

Derbyshire Dales District Council

Final Report

October 2016



Executive Summary

M-E-L Research were commissioned to speak to businesses across the Derbyshire Dales in order to understand the need and demand for business accommodation across the district as well as their current broadband experience.

Methodology

- Business contacts were gathered via a combination of purchasing contacts through Experian, as well as the Councils own database
- Given the nature of the survey, businesses on industrial estates and business parks and in key sectors were particularly targeted including manufacturing (including food and drink); engineering; construction; information and communication; professional/scientific/medical; creative and digital; transport and distribution
- Each business was initially sent an email invite to complete the survey online
- After a week, those that had not responded were contacted via telephone a minimum of five times during the data collection period (18th August-23rd Sep 2016)
- In total, 783 businesses within Derbyshire Dales were contacted
- A total of 197 valid surveys were completed, producing a response rate of 25%
- Results were combined with data where possible from 27 surveys completed with businesses located on the Ashbourne Airfield Industrial Estate as part of a separate telephone survey undertaken by the District Council in May 2016 providing a total survey sample of 224.
- The responses to the broadband questions (pages 25-28) also include responses we received from non-targeted sectors (such as retail, retail, leisure, hospitality & tourism, etc.); therefore the base size will be considerably higher for these questions.

Analysis and reporting

- The overall results in this report are accurate to $\pm 6.26\%$ at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% certain that the results are between $\pm 6.26\%$ of the calculated response, so the 'true' response could be 6.26% above or below the figures reported (e.g. a 50% agreement rate could in reality lie within the range of 43.74% to 56.26%)¹ which is statistically robust for the purposes of this survey.

¹ Based on a business population size of 2,600 (retrieved from Nomis on 22 September 2016) and sample size of 224



- The results for questions where a smaller proportion have responded will have a wider confidence interval and therefore greater caution needs to be applied when interpreting these results.
- Where possible and where relevant, sub-group analysis has been carried out for results from specific questions for example, by business sector, size of company, and current premises
- In such cases, findings are only reported where the base size is over ten. For example, if a question is analysed by business sector, only those business sectors where we have responses from at least ten businesses are included in the commentary. These findings should still be interpreted with caution.
- Owing to the rounding of numbers, percentages displayed visually on graphs in the report may not always add up to 100% and may differ slightly when compared with the text. The figures provided in the text should always be used as the authoritative results. For some questions, respondents could give more than one response (multiple choice). For these questions, the percentage for each response is calculated as a percentage of the total number of respondents and therefore percentages do not add up to 100%.

Respondent profile

- Nine out of ten (93%) of the businesses responding were either small (21%) or micro (72%) businesses
- The largest proportion of responses came from businesses within the manufacturing and engineering sectors (30%). Other sectors include Service (13%); Creative and digital industry (9%) and construction (9%).
- A map showing the location of the respondents is included in the full report.

Key headlines:



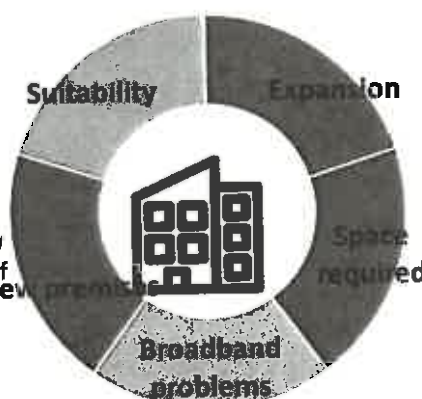
Over half state their current premises will no longer be suitable in 5 years time



43% have current plans to expand their business



2 in 3 of those planning expansion will need new premises (one quarter of the total sample)



Amongst those potentially seeking premises, a third will require industrial space, a quarter office space



70% of businesses report problems with their current broadband service, particularly with speed and reliability

Main Findings:

Current premises:

- Eight out of ten businesses (81%) are satisfied with their current premises
- However, despite high satisfaction with current premises, around a third (31%) envisage that their premises will only be adequate for two years or less with a further 20% indicating that their premises will only be adequate for the next five years. This means that for half (51% of all businesses that responded to this question (base size 205); their current premises will no longer be suitable in five years' time or less.
- The most common factors restricting the operation of businesses are inadequate broadband availability (35%); parking for staff (24%) and customers (22%); and the size of premises (22%). Only 14% report the quality of the premises as being a current restriction.
- Of those responding the size of the premises appears to be a restriction particularly for food and drink (42%); manufacturing and engineering (26%); and service businesses (24%)
- Both micro (21%) and small (30%) businesses report that the size of their current premises is restricting their operation (32 businesses)



- There appears to be a particular need for industrial premises (general and light) with nearly two thirds (63%) of those currently occupying industrial premises, stating that their premises will no longer be suitable in five years' time
- Similarly, 54% of office based businesses (serviced and un-serviced combined) anticipate that their premises will no longer suffice in five years' time (39 businesses)

Future business accommodation needs:

- 43% of businesses currently have plans to expand their business, particularly those in industrial premises (52%)
- 55% of small businesses (26 businesses) are looking to expand their business compared to 39% of micro businesses (62 businesses)
- Of those who are not currently looking to expand or are not sure, only 9% state that this is due to the UK referendum decision to leave the EU (not asked in survey for Ashbourne Airfield Industrial Estate businesses)
- Of those who are looking to expand their business, two-thirds (64%) (56 businesses) require new premises, with half of these (32%) also requiring additional land to expand
- Additional land requirements varied greatly between 186 sqm/ 2,000 sq. ft. to 5 acres with a typical requirement of around 1 acre
- Results suggest that a diverse range of property types will be required locally in the future; Over a quarter (27%) of those looking to expand their business require industrial premises, just over a fifth (21%) require new office space and 41% require 'other' types of premises which consist of combinations of different types of workspaces with the most common being office and warehouse/industrial combined (9 businesses)
- 21% of businesses (12 businesses) requiring new workspace need small premises (1-100 sqm/10-1100 sq. ft.).
- 30% require medium sized premises (101-500 sqm/1101-5400 sq. ft.) which consist of 17 businesses. Of these, ten state that they would "almost certainly take up these premises" if it met their requirements and became available in the next two years.
- A third (32% - 18 businesses) require larger sized premises (501sqm+/5,400+ sq.ft) with the majority requiring premises of 1001+ sqm/10,801+ sq.ft Of these 18 businesses, four state that they would "almost certainly take up these premises" if it met their requirements and became available in the next two years.
- 44% of businesses requiring new premises require 'high quality' premises, and 32% require 'average' quality. 15% require basic/budget premises and the remaining 10% have no preference.

- Of those who have plans to move or expand their business, the most frequently mentioned areas to locate to include Darley Dale, Bakewell, Ashbourne and Matlock. Other respondents indicated that anywhere with a reliable internet connection or that falls within the Derbyshire Dales would be of interest to them.
- Those who are currently looking to expand their business were asked if this would create additional jobs. 95% (53 businesses) state that it would, with an average of six new jobs being created. Three businesses from the manufacturing and engineering sector anticipate 10 or more jobs being created (10, 25 and 30 jobs)
- 40% of respondents (17 businesses) stated that if new premises became available in the next two years which met their requirements, they would almost certainly take up these premises. A further 55% would “consider” taking up these premises.

Broadband experience:

- Three quarters of businesses identify fast, reliable broadband as imperative or very important to their business. Fewer than 10% claim it is not important.
- Seven in ten report issues with their current broadband service, most commonly these relate to speed and reliability of the connection. Around four in ten stated that they had problems with reliability (dropping out/being disconnected), speed at different times of the day and maximum speed.
- Respondents were also asked how improvements to the speed and reliability of their broadband service would benefit them. Over half (56%) said that this would ‘speed up processes’ and 49% of respondents stated more effective communication. 42% of respondents also said that fast, reliable broadband would lead to improved business productivity.