



Business Survey

2010



Business Survey 2010

As part of East Lindsey District Council's (ELDC) commitment to the following strategic objectives:

1. Increasing skills and aspirations
2. Stimulating competition and business growth
3. Enhancing the visitor product

The 2010 Business Survey was undertaken as a key engagement activity, providing businesses with an opportunity to communicate their views on, and perceptions of the local business environment and the role of ELDC in supporting future business development. The survey examines a range of current business issues in three key areas:

1. About Your Business
2. Business Development
3. Supply Networks

Where possible we have compared the 2010 results with the previous Business Survey results from 2007, some of these comparisons are shown.

The information businesses provided will be used to design and implement future service delivery and project work, ensuring that the services we provide are developed in partnership with local businesses.

The survey was sent to 2071 businesses and in total 188 responses were received corresponding to a 9.3% return rate. 22 of the 188 surveys were completed online.

1. About Your Business

1.1 What is the nature of your business?

	2007	2010
Retail	36	45
Manufacturing	25	22
Agriculture/land based activities	22	19
Tourism/Leisure	42	32
Service	50	50
Construction	1	14
Other	26	31

1.2 How long has your business been established?

1.3 How long has your business been operating in East Lindsey?

Over half of respondents have been established and operating in East Lindsey for more than ten years. Only 11% of businesses have been trading for two years or less.

1.4 Why did you choose to locate your business in East Lindsey?

Over 70% of businesses were located in East Lindsey because of links to home and family, or because the business was already based in the area.

(54% - live in area/family connections, 29% - business already based in area)

1.5 Including yourself, what is your total number of employees?

More than two thirds of respondents (68%) were micro businesses employing less than 10 people. 24% were small businesses and only 5% were medium sized businesses. Data revealed that tourism and leisure related businesses provided seasonal employment.

1.6 What proportion of your employees live in East Lindsey?

A significant proportion of businesses (89%) have over 50% of their employees living within the East Lindsey District, only 18 businesses had less than 50% of their employees living in East Lindsey.

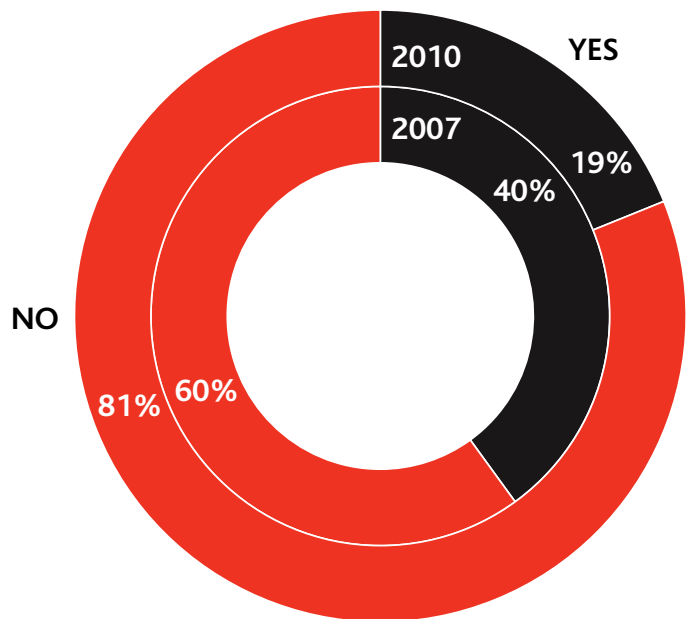
1.7 How many posts have you created in the past 12 months?

Overall the respondents created 125 full time posts and 75 part time posts in the last year.

1.8 Have you made any posts redundant in the past 12 months?

Over the last year 15 companies reduced 28 full time and 25 part time posts.

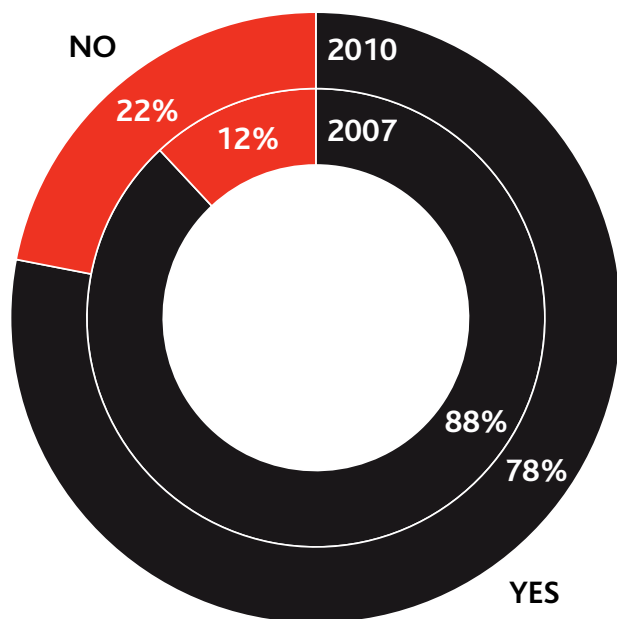
1.9 Have you experienced difficulty filling vacant posts?



1.10 What have been your main recruiting difficulties?

Type of difficulty	Lack of applicants	Lack of applicants with required qualifications / skills	Lack of applicants with required experience	Higher wages offered by competitors	Job entails shift work / unsocial hours	Poor transport infrastructure makes it difficult to travel to work	Applicants have poor motivation / attitude
Managerial posts	2	2	3	0	0	0	1
Non-managerial posts	13	19	16	7	5	6	20

1.11a Do you offer training for your employees?



1.11b How is this provided?

The majority of respondents offered in house training to staff (56%) while 18% of businesses relied on local colleges to provide their training requirements.

1.11c Have you experienced any difficulties finding the training provision that you require?

More than half of the respondents did not have difficulty finding the training provision required. Those that did have difficulty cited costs and distance to travel to the training providers.

1.12 What (if any) are your current skills gaps?

Only 25 businesses stated that they had any current skills gaps and these were mostly job specific (i.e. motor engineers, agricultural mechanics, plumbing, electrical....)

1.13 What are your future training needs?

When asked about any future training needs most of the responses were in ICT, financial skills and job specific requirements.

1.14a Does your business have a connection to the internet?

1.14b Do you rely on the internet to carry out your business?

1.14c Is the broadband speed sufficient for your business needs?

The majority of respondents now have a broadband internet connection (85%), with 5% having a dial up connection, however 50% of businesses stated that they do not rely on the internet for their business activities. A third stated that the speed was not sufficient for their needs.

1.15 What proportion of your customers are from the East Lindsey District?

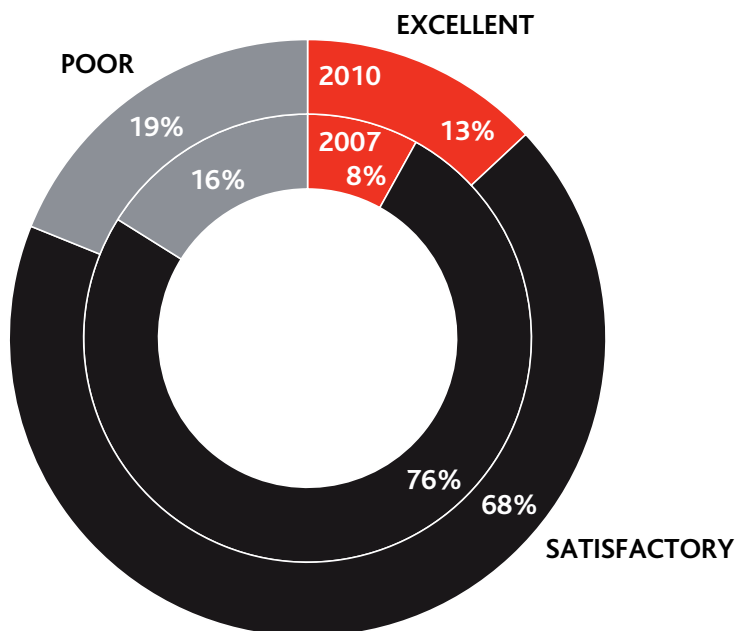
Just under half (48%) of businesses reported that their customer base is from the district.

1.16 What proportion of your customers are from overseas?

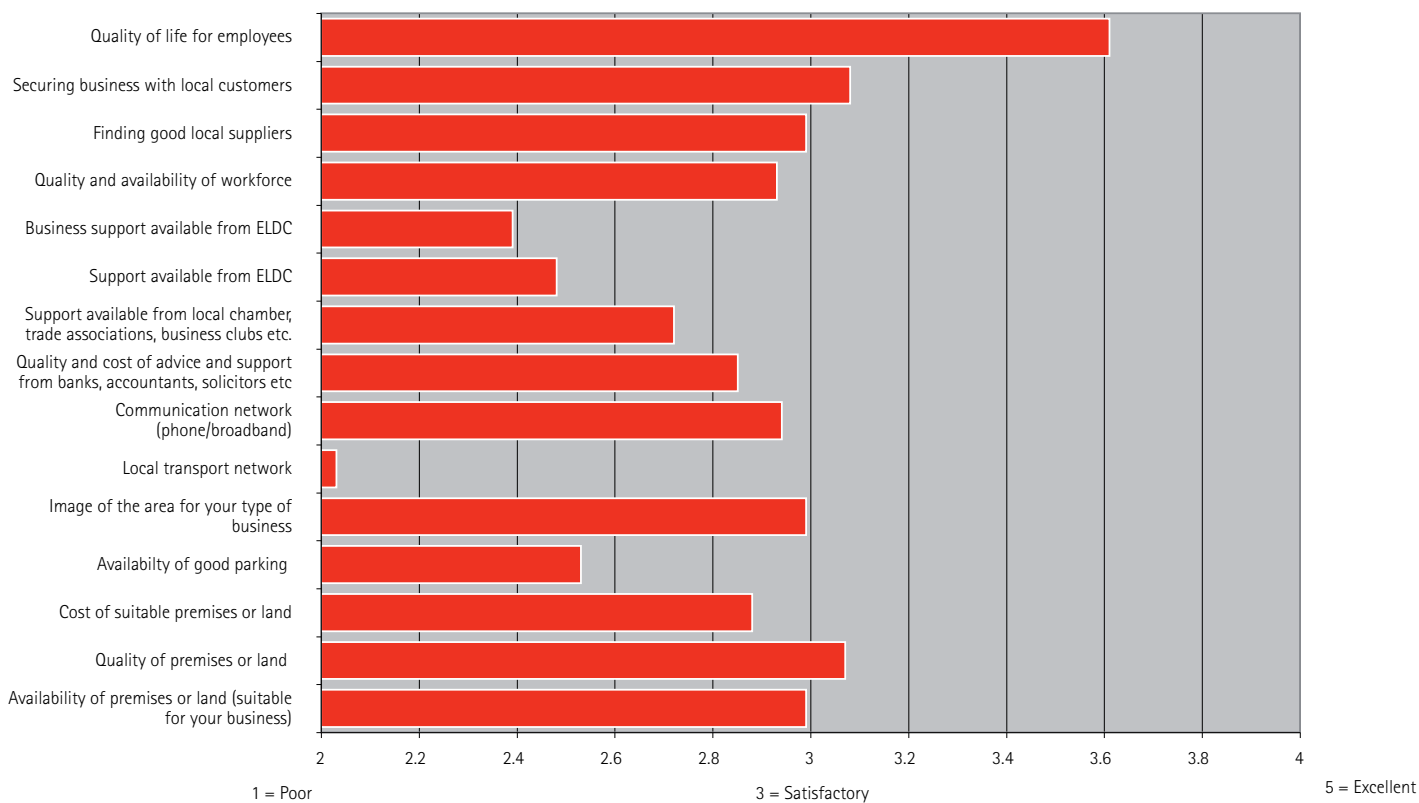
Only 3% of businesses said that more than 20% of their customers were from overseas. 59% had no overseas customers, 32% under 20% and 6% were not sure.

2. Business Development

2.1 What is your overall satisfaction with East Lindsey as a business location?

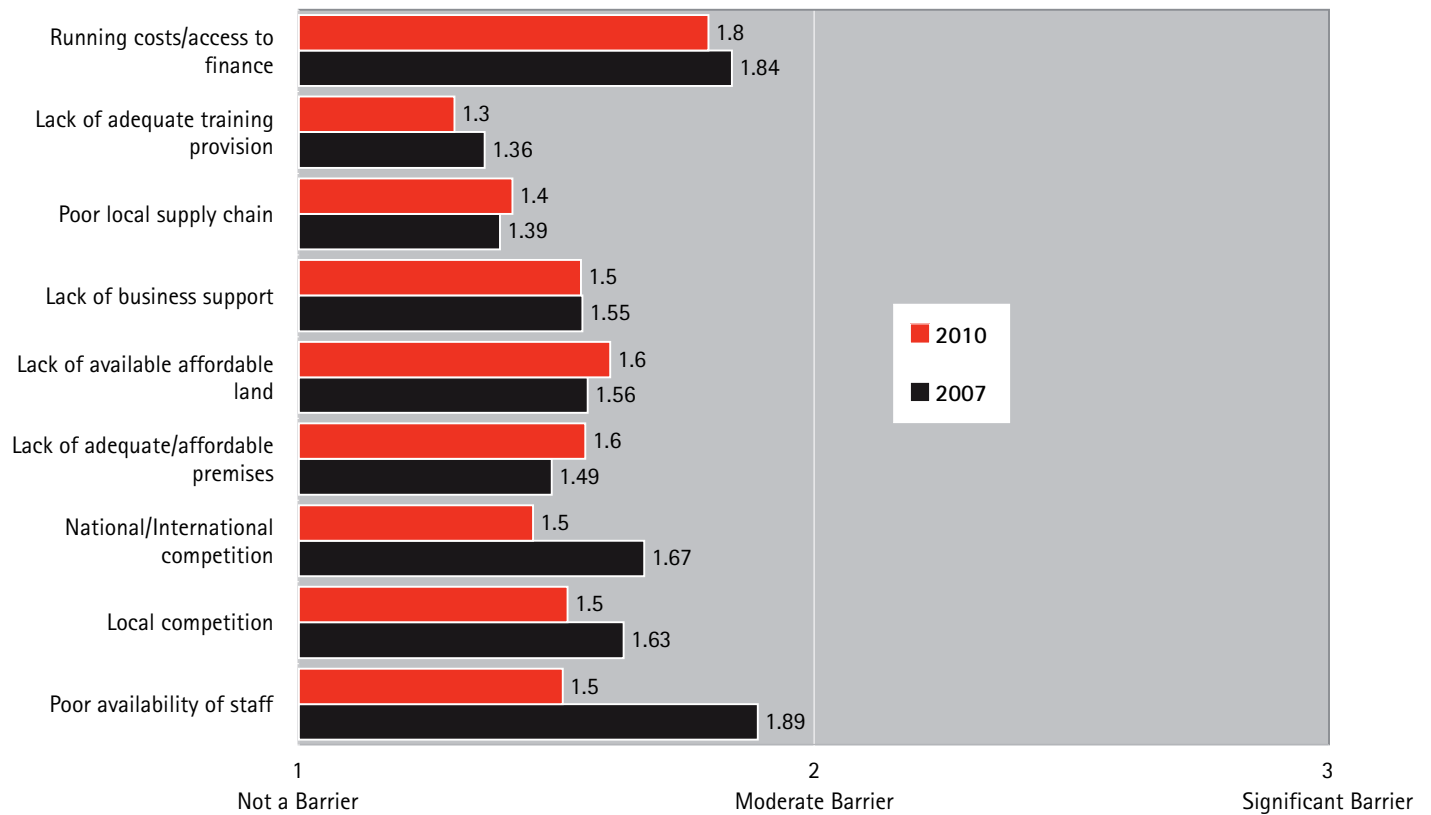


2.2 Please rate the following in East Lindsey?



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2.3 Which of the following would you consider as barriers to the ongoing success of your business?



2.4 What have been the most important challenges that your business has faced over the past two years?

The economic recession was the most important challenge faced over the past two years. Other challenges included rising costs, declining customer numbers, poor customer spend and lack of access to funding (however, these factors are also linked to the recession).

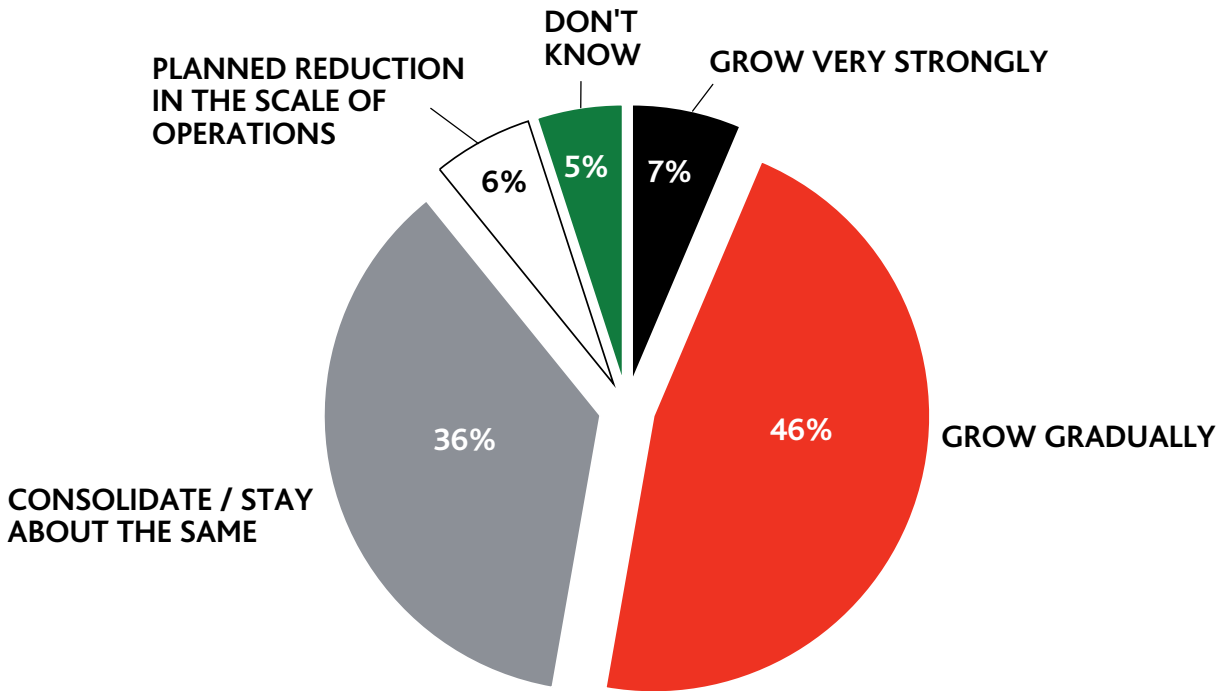
2.5a In dealing with these challenges did you seek any advice or assistance from outside your business?

2.5b If answered 'yes' where did you source support/advice from?

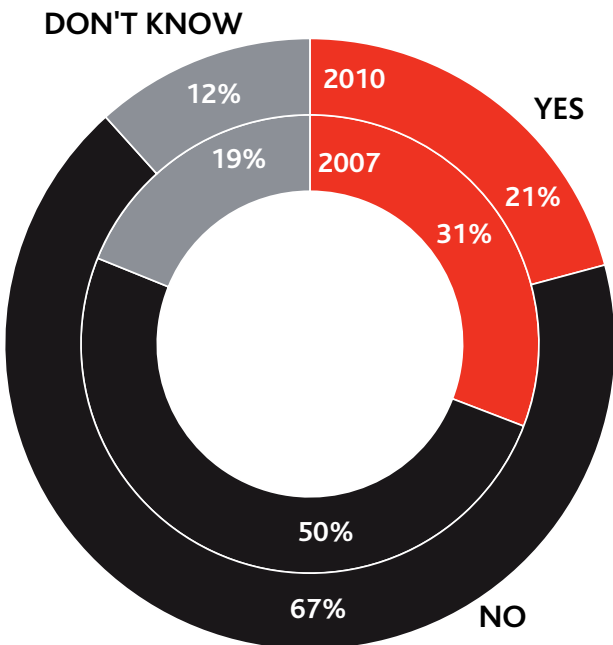
2.5c Was the advice given helpful?

More than half sought help and advice. Those in the tourism/leisure business asked support from Visit Lincolnshire, while others contacted their local chambers of commerce, Business Link and other professionals, such as accountants and banking institutions. Most of the businesses who sourced support stated the advice given was helpful.

2.6 Over the next two years how do you see your business developing?



2.7a Are you considering moving or expanding premises in the next 2 years?

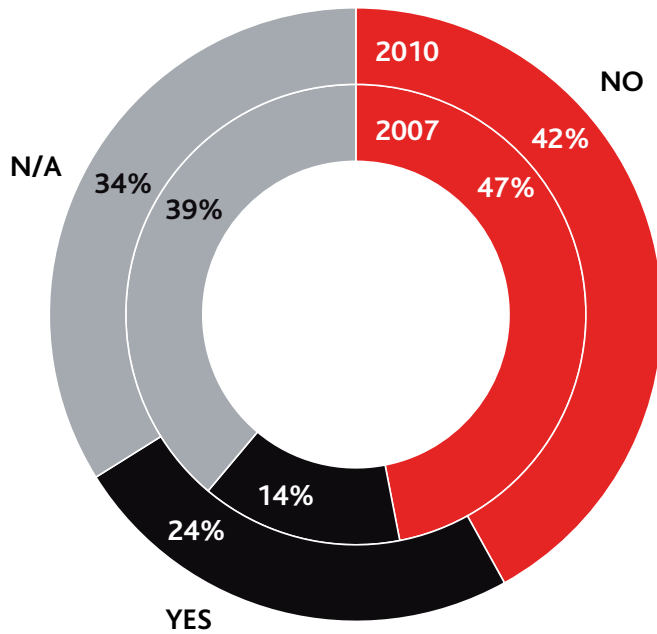


2.7b If you are considering moving premises, are you likely to move within the East Lindsey district?

39% of respondents stated that if they moved they would be likely to stay in East Lindsey, however 35% stated they would be unlikely to stay in East Lindsey. The remaining 26% were unsure.

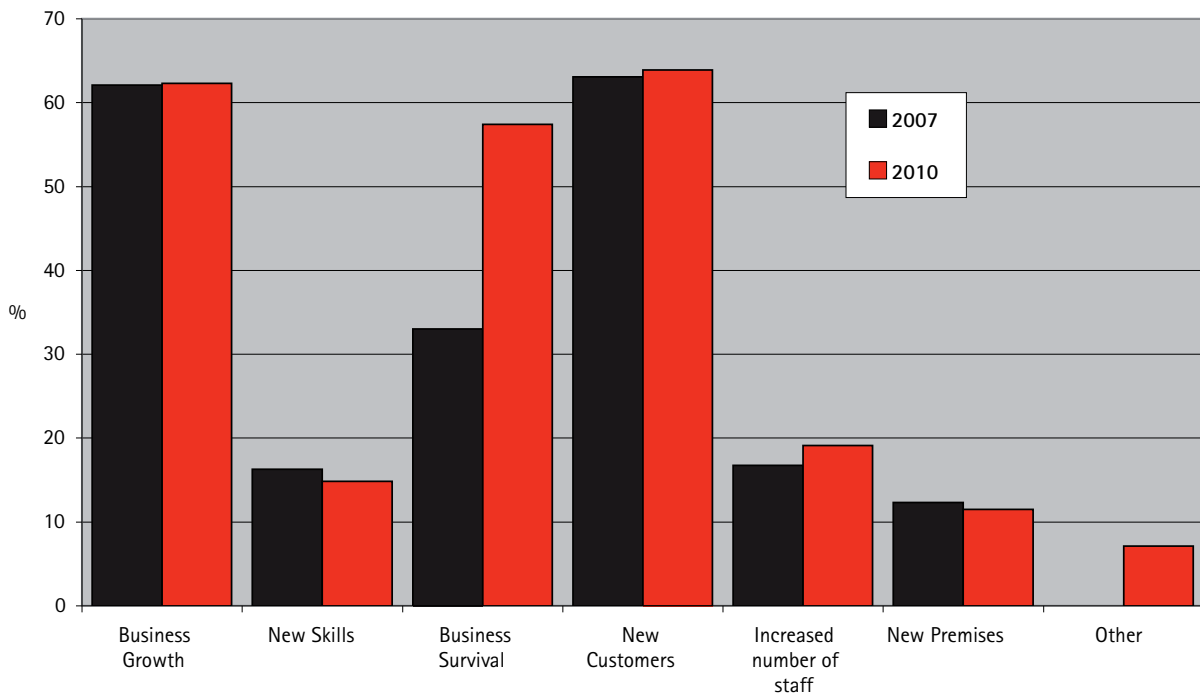
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2.7d Have you experienced problems finding suitable premises/land?
If 'Yes', what was the greatest difficulty?



The greatest difficulties businesses found when looking for premises/land were cost (7 businesses), finding suitable location (5), planning restrictions (5), availability (4) and finding suitable size (2).

2.8 What are the key priorities for your business over the next five years?



2.9 What businesses or support services would you like to see attracted to the area to support your business development?

Improved tourism marketing	7
Financial support	7
IT support	6
Attract more businesses (manufacturing, IT, marketing, corporate)	6
Support for small businesses	3
Improved transport links	3
Development-friendly planning	3
Improved visitor attractions	3
Improved car parking	3
Broadband	3
Support for environmental projects	2
Reduction in business rates	2
Improved communication of services by ELDC	2
Networking	1
Improved training opportunities	1

2.11 What projects or initiatives would you like to see developed in your area to support local business growth?

Improved transport infrastructure	16
Improved tourism promotion	9
Car parking (increase and reduce costs)	8
Review of Planning services and improved Planning support	7
General Business Support (training, advice etc.)	7
Financial assistance (grants, funding)	5
Business networking opportunities	4
Support for environmental projects	3
Improved IT infrastructure	3
Lower business rates	3
Improved street scene	3
Increased support for local shops	2
Youth projects/activities	2
Increase services for ageing population	2
Other	23

2.10 Would you be interested in attending any of the following events in EL?

	YES	NO	MAYBE
Business Networking	26%	43%	31%
Business lunch/briefing with ELDC Senior Management	20%	52%	28%
Business Award/Reward Evening	11%	58%	31%

3. Supply Networks

3.1 Do you currently provide supplies or work to other businesses in East Lindsey?

53% of respondents (96) supplied local businesses in the East Lindsey District.

3.2 Would you consider using local suppliers if they were available?

88% of respondents (156) stated that they would consider using local suppliers if they were available.

3.3 Would you be interested in working with other local businesses to promote and develop local supply networks?

54% of respondents (97) stated that they would be interested in participating in a local supplier network. 26% of respondents (46) stated that they didn't know, which indicates further potential for those who may require additional information.

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If you would like further information on the 2010 Business Survey, please contact:

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Summary

The types of businesses that responded to the Survey reflects the rural economy dominated by micro and small to medium sized businesses. Most of the businesses have been established for 10 years or more with only 11% trading under 2 years or less. The largest sector completing the survey is the service sector with retail and tourism/leisure forming the second and third highest. Despite the recession, in the last year 100 businesses have created 125 full time and 75 part time posts, however 15 businesses reduced 28 full time and 25 part time posts in the same year.

There were not many issues regarding training provision except for in specialist skills. The majority of respondents offered in house training and when asked about future training needs, in addition to job specific training most responses were in ICT and financial skills. 90% of the businesses now have an internet connection, however some businesses do not find the broadband speed adequate for their needs.

Most businesses are satisfied with East Lindsey as a business location, with quality of life for employees rated the highest. There was general satisfaction with the availability, quality and costs of premises and land in the area. However, there were issues with the local transport network and car parking facilities.

The data suggests that overall there are no significant barriers facing local businesses. The recession has been the biggest challenge for the businesses and with it, the related issues of declining customer base, rising costs, cash flow issues and lack of access to funding. The noticeable differences between the 2007 and

2010 results are also unsurprisingly related to the recession i.e. filling vacant posts – 40% had difficulty filling vacant posts in 2007 compared with 19% in 2010; less businesses offer training in 2010; less businesses are considering moving or expanding premises compared to 2007 and in 2010 more businesses see 'Business Survival' as a key priority over the next 5 years.

Overall the results were very similar for 2007 and 2010, with the biggest differences highlighted above.

Positively, the majority of respondents thought their business would grow over the next 2 years and over one-third believe that they will consolidate or stay the same. However, just 21% stated that they would consider moving or expanding premises and of these only 39% said they would likely stay in East Lindsey. Unfortunately we do not know the reason for this as we did not investigate this question further.

The support services and initiatives that the respondents would like to see varied but the most common were, improved tourism promotion, improved transport infrastructure and financial support.

There is the potential for a local supplier network as a large percentage of the respondents stated that they would consider using local suppliers if they were available and also 54% stated they would be interested in participating in such a network.

In future years some of the questions will be investigated further to provide us with more detail.

Next Steps

The information gathered through the Survey provides valuable information about the businesses in East Lindsey and their needs. The data will be used to support businesses by helping to shape future service delivery and project work.



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