

Durham City Neighbourhood Planning Forum

Survey of Businesses in Durham City

Adam Deathe and Pippa Bell

The survey was carried out in March 2016. An email was sent to BID (Durham Business Improvement District) members in March 2016 who were invited to answer an electronic questionnaire. There were 13 respondents.

What's the best thing about running a business in Durham City?

- It is a unique small city beautiful and historic with a university in the heart. So Durham attracts really nice visitors. We love our customers
- Having all the heritage near by
- Lovely Environment to be based in. Historic setting.
- The tourists that are brought into our Cathedral
- Tourism
- The ambience and its people
- Busy and the city centre is very attractive
- Customer Satisfaction
- Regular customers, i.e. repeat trade
- The passion and drive all our co workers have
- It's my home City
- Our business does not have local clients so it is just about being a good place to live
- Nothing, it is a disaster

What's the greatest challenge to running a business in Durham City?

- Rates
- big business rates and rents
- Rents and rates
- The rents and rates are just stupid
- High car parking charges
- Car parking charges
- parking
- Footfall
- Lack of footfall
- Getting the footfall
- lack of retailers
- Lack of retailers, far too many coffee shops, no choice
- out of town shopping, lack of locals coming to the City
- That people do not spend as much money as they did in times past. I have been here since 1981. But then Durham is better than other towns. Note how clothing shops on Elvet Bridge have all had to close
- authorities trying to make Durham into York

- Infrastructure issues; transport and internet
- Plus lack of efficient, modern (eco) office space
- Being Successful
- Buskers

What would help the development of your business in Durham City?

- Free parking
- 2 hours free parking
- Cheaper car parking
- Park & Ride open later and cheaper parking
- Cheaper City Centre parking
- Park & Ride option on a Sunday
- Knowing when events are happening
- Clearer signposting to the Cathedral
- Website
- Rates reduction
- Lower rents and rates
- lower rates and rents
- Well one thing that helps every Tuesday a coach load of visitors arrive for the day. IN the 1980's, the tag 'Land of the Prince Bishops' was used to attract more visitors to Durham, whoever was behind this had great ideas and Durham grew in reputation
- Bigger premises
- Empty shops are terrible for the City
- Fibre connectivity

What is your business, and how many people work there?

Eg: Retail, food or goods, professional services, other services, manufacturing, tourism, social enterprise.

- Retail - non food (14)
- Retail - non food (12)
- Retail - non food (2)
- Retail - non-food (5)
- Retail - non-food (6)
- Retail - non-food (20)
- Retail - non-food (12)
- Retail - food (14)
- Retail - food (50)
- Retail - food (23)
- Professional services (8)
- Professional services (10)
- Health & Beauty (4)

How do you see the future prospects for your business in Durham?

- Very good
- Good
- Big organisations so not moving anywhere
- The opening of the Open Treasure Exhibition route in the Cathedral promises to act as an incredible draw to visitors. This will result in increased footfall and corresponding customer spend
- ok, depends on how many more cafes open
- Shaky
- I have a great little shop that people love. But I only see it diminishing. I work harder each year to stand still
- Challenging
- Unsure at present whether to remain here
- There isn't any, we are running out our lease and moving to Newcastle
- Bleak if things don't change, there are only a handful of independent retailers left
- Poor
- Soon the high street will disappear

How do you and your colleagues travel to work in Durham?

- Car (8 respondents)
- Park & Ride
- public transport
- Bus (3 respondents)
- walking (4 respondents)
- All forms

Any further comments

- High rents/lack of parking are negative to Durham
- This town is now a coffee bar for students
- I would like to see Durham developed like York with lots of independent shops that create individual character for our city
- Anything to help tourism is a good thing
- The Christmas festival is a boost to all traders here. Any other imaginative events at other times of the year would be a good idea
- Keep rents and rates realistic. Stop the senseless increase in the minimum wage. And above all, let us trade. Durham is not York, it's a large village with a medium sized University attached, what authorities there are should be realistic about the ability it has in changing shopper habits.
- The retail parks around the City are taking all the business from Durham. Free parking and more choice. We need to act now or lose the high street.
- Banners and flyers advertising up & coming events
- Hard to attract new employees to come and work here
- All staff use park & ride