

Town Centre Survey

We are the Epsom Town Business Partnership and we want to hear and understand your views about the town centre.

Perhaps, like us, you want to grow your business, to increase footfall around your business - stem the flow to neighbouring centres or deter them from doing all their shopping on-line. Maybe you too want to make Epsom a more fun and interesting place so it's easier to attract and retain the best staff.

What this means in practice will differ from businesses to business and so we want to collect as many views from across the town centre as possible so that we can plan for a better, more profitable future.

We've been inspired by the many town centres who have created Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) as a way of local companies taking control of their town centres and funding ways to make it better.

It is of significant concern to us that all our key competitors - Kingston, Sutton and Guildford - all have BIDs in place, making these centres better and sucking away our potential customers and staff.

A visioning event (hosted by Surrey Chambers of Commerce) took place in March where around forty business leaders from across Epsom town centre discussed what a BID could do for our town. At the end of the event they unanimously agreed that Epsom should look seriously at creating a BID and move to the next stage - a survey of all businesses to see if a BID is feasible in the town.

So that's why we're now sending you the attached survey - and an information brochure about BIDs. We want to understand your views, the real needs of businesses in the area and the barriers and opportunities for growth. Specifically, we want to see if you too think we should follow the successful examples of over 200 towns in Britain that have set up a Business Improvement District.

We'd be grateful if you could complete the survey and return it by XX/XX/16 to any of the drop-off points around the town centre set out at the end. We very much look forward to hearing your views.

Contact Details

Q1	Name 94 (100.0%)
Q2	Business name 97 (100.0%)
Q3	Address with postcode 93 (100.0%)
Q4	Phone number 87 (100.0%)
Q5	Email address 85 (100.0%)
Q6	How do you prefer to be contacted
	Email.....75 (80.6%)
	In person.....16 (17.2%)
	By phone.....22 (23.7%)
	In writing9 (9.7%)

Your Business

Q7	What type of business do you run? (Tick all that apply)
	Comparison retail (fashion, gifts, home etc).....23 (29.5%)
	Convenience retail (food, newsagent etc)5 (6.4%)
	Service retail (hairdresser, nail bar etc).....17 (21.8%)
	Restaurant/ cafe/ takeaway15 (19.2%)
	Pub/ bar/ leisure5 (6.4%)
	Office and professional.....17 (21.8%)
	Other 19 (100.0%)
Q8	Is your business
	Independent.....51 (53.1%)
	Part of a national group38 (39.6%)
	Part of a franchise7 (7.3%)

Q9 How long have you been trading in Epsom?

1-3 years.....	23 (24.5%)
3-6 years.....	11 (11.7%)
6-10 years.....	15 (16.0%)
More than 10 years.....	45 (47.9%)

About Epsom

Q10 Which three town centres do you think are Epsom's main competitors?

Croydon	27 (28.7%)
Dorking	12 (12.8%)
Guildford.....	45 (47.9%)
Kingston.....	88 (93.6%)
Sutton	63 (67.0%)
Other 4 (100.0%)	

Q11 Do you think Epsom achieves its potential as:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
A market town for local people	11 (11.6%)	56 (58.9%)	16 (16.8%)	8 (8.4%)	4 (4.2%)
A place for businesses to start and grow	2 (2.1%)	44 (45.4%)	32 (33.0%)	11 (11.3%)	8 (8.2%)
A retail destination	1 (1.1%)	38 (41.3%)	37 (40.2%)	13 (14.1%)	3 (3.3%)
A place for a good evening out	2 (2.1%)	44 (46.8%)	29 (30.9%)	12 (12.8%)	7 (7.4%)
A place for a fun day out	0 (0.0%)	23 (24.5%)	42 (44.7%)	23 (24.5%)	6 (6.4%)

Q12 Rate the following aspects in the town centre where 1 is not a problem and 5 a significant problem

	1 Not a problem	2 Not a problem	3 Neutral	4 Significant problem	5 Significant problem	Don't know
Cleanliness of streets during the day	38 (39.2%)	26 (26.8%)	24 (24.7%)	4 (4.1%)	5 (5.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Cleanliness of the streets in the evening	19 (20.2%)	15 (16.0%)	28 (29.8%)	19 (20.2%)	5 (5.3%)	8 (8.5%)
Finding your way around the town centre	26 (28.6%)	22 (24.2%)	24 (26.4%)	15 (16.5%)	4 (4.4%)	0 (0.0%)
Quality of streets, pavements and public spaces	15 (15.8%)	17 (17.9%)	34 (35.8%)	20 (21.1%)	9 (9.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Variety of retail outlets	6 (6.5%)	12 (12.9%)	23 (24.7%)	29 (31.2%)	22 (23.7%)	1 (1.1%)
Overall image of the area	13 (13.7%)	18 (18.9%)	36 (37.9%)	19 (20.0%)	8 (8.4%)	1 (1.1%)
Shoplifting	9 (9.6%)	17 (18.1%)	29 (30.9%)	15 (16.0%)	8 (8.5%)	16 (17.0%)
General perception of crime	12 (12.6%)	25 (26.3%)	36 (37.9%)	10 (10.5%)	3 (3.2%)	9 (9.5%)
Graffiti and vandalism	16 (17.4%)	34 (37.0%)	22 (23.9%)	10 (10.9%)	3 (3.3%)	7 (7.6%)
Crime against the person (assault etc)	9 (9.7%)	30 (32.3%)	30 (32.3%)	8 (8.6%)	4 (4.3%)	12 (12.9%)
Anti-social behaviour (eg drunkenness)	7 (7.5%)	18 (19.4%)	28 (30.1%)	24 (25.8%)	5 (5.4%)	11 (11.8%)
Pavement clutter and A-Boards left on pavement	18 (19.8%)	25 (27.5%)	33 (36.3%)	9 (9.9%)	1 (1.1%)	5 (5.5%)
Traffic congestion	4 (4.2%)	3 (3.2%)	14 (14.7%)	31 (32.6%)	42 (44.2%)	1 (1.1%)
Level of shop rents	2 (2.2%)	6 (6.5%)	22 (23.7%)	26 (28.0%)	25 (26.9%)	12 (12.9%)
Availability of car park spaces	10 (10.4%)	13 (13.5%)	15 (15.6%)	27 (28.1%)	31 (32.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Partnership working between businesses	4 (4.3%)	12 (12.8%)	40 (42.6%)	17 (18.1%)	13 (13.8%)	8 (8.5%)
Availability of parking for business deliveries	2 (2.1%)	7 (7.3%)	15 (15.6%)	30 (31.3%)	41 (42.7%)	1 (1.0%)
Cost of parking	2 (2.2%)	4 (4.3%)	14 (15.1%)	23 (24.7%)	49 (52.7%)	1 (1.1%)
Recruiting and retaining the right staff	10 (10.9%)	21 (22.8%)	30 (32.6%)	18 (19.6%)	10 (10.9%)	3 (3.3%)
Lack of contactless payment at Epsom station	6 (6.3%)	5 (5.3%)	25 (26.3%)	20 (21.1%)	30 (31.6%)	9 (9.5%)
Street decoration (hanging baskets, planting)	20 (20.8%)	15 (15.6%)	38 (39.6%)	16 (16.7%)	6 (6.3%)	1 (1.0%)

Q13 How much do you think the following could improve your trading conditions?

	A lot	A little	Not at all	Don't know
Uniformed patrol in the day	8 (8.5%)	46 (48.9%)	35 (37.2%)	5 (5.3%)
Uniformed patrol at night	23 (24.5%)	35 (37.2%)	26 (27.7%)	10 (10.6%)
A more pedestrian-friendly town centre	41 (43.6%)	35 (37.2%)	17 (18.1%)	1 (1.1%)
More litter picking	18 (19.4%)	53 (57.0%)	20 (21.5%)	2 (2.2%)
More gun removal/ deep clean of pavements	24 (25.5%)	44 (46.8%)	24 (25.5%)	2 (2.1%)
Overall image of the area	49 (52.7%)	37 (39.8%)	6 (6.5%)	1 (1.1%)
An Epsom loyalty card	21 (22.3%)	42 (44.7%)	20 (21.3%)	11 (11.7%)
Increased promotional activity (of Epsom town centre)	53 (55.8%)	29 (30.5%)	8 (8.4%)	5 (5.3%)
More events in the town centre	54 (56.8%)	30 (31.6%)	9 (9.5%)	2 (2.1%)
More specialist markets	44 (46.8%)	35 (37.2%)	12 (12.8%)	3 (3.2%)
Business networking events and opportunities	46 (48.9%)	36 (38.3%)	10 (10.6%)	2 (2.1%)
Town centre-wide free wifi	44 (46.8%)	31 (33.0%)	16 (17.0%)	3 (3.2%)
Improvements to pavement and public spaces	35 (37.6%)	44 (47.3%)	11 (11.8%)	3 (3.2%)
Businesses collectively buying utilities to cut costs	24 (26.1%)	32 (34.8%)	20 (21.7%)	16 (17.4%)
Strategy to bring in more/ new retail	62 (66.0%)	22 (23.4%)	8 (8.5%)	2 (2.1%)
Availability of parking/ stopping for deliveries	65 (67.7%)	20 (20.8%)	7 (7.3%)	4 (4.2%)
Parking incentives and offers	70 (73.7%)	19 (20.0%)	5 (5.3%)	1 (1.1%)
Finding and retaining the right staff	38 (41.3%)	34 (37.0%)	14 (15.2%)	6 (6.5%)
Introducing contactless payment at Epsom station	42 (44.7%)	31 (33.0%)	14 (14.9%)	7 (7.4%)
Taxi marshals to efficiently get people into cabs at night	16 (16.8%)	37 (38.9%)	28 (29.5%)	14 (14.7%)
Enhancement of Epsom's historic nature	30 (31.9%)	37 (39.4%)	19 (20.2%)	8 (8.5%)
Marketing of Epsom as a contrast to clone towns	39 (41.1%)	37 (38.9%)	13 (13.7%)	6 (6.3%)
More CCTV	39 (41.1%)	31 (32.6%)	18 (18.9%)	7 (7.4%)
Footfall counters in key parts of the town centre	25 (26.9%)	32 (34.4%)	21 (22.6%)	15 (16.1%)
Other- please state	13 (100.0%)			

Capital Investment

Our main competitors have big capital investments in progress: Eden Walk in Kingston; both ends of Sutton town centre; Guildford's and Leatherhead's regeneration masterplan.

Q14	How concerned are you that Epsom might find it even harder to compete with these?	
	Very concerned.....	30 (31.3%)
	Quite concerned	35 (36.5%)
	Only a little concerned	19 (19.8%)
	Not at all concerned.....	7 (7.3%)
	Don't know.....	5 (5.2%)

Business Improvement District (BID) Investment

In addition to big capital investments Kingston, Sutton, Croydon and Guildford all have BIDs in place. These are business-lead, business-funded bodies, formed to improve a town centre - it's the businesses that decide what they want for an area and pool funding to pay for it

Q15	Do you think a BID would be good for Epsom - something that should be tested at a ballot?	
	Yes.....	56 (58.9%)
	No	5 (5.3%)
	Undecided - need more information	34 (35.8%)

Q16	How far do you think Epsom could benefit from an additional spend of between £150,000 and £20,000 a year?	
	Hugely.....	36 (38.3%)
	Quite a lot	26 (27.7%)
	Somewhat	20 (21.3%)
	Not at all	3 (3.2%)
	Don't know.....	9 (9.6%)

Q17	How optimistic are you that your trading conditions will improve if Epsom businesses don't pursue a Business Improvement District	
	Hugely.....	9 (10.3%)
	Quite a lot	27 (31.0%)
	Somewhat.....	35 (40.2%)
	Not at all	16 (18.4%)

Q18	Would you like to be further involved in your town centre?	
	Yes.....	54 (61.4%)
	No.....	34 (38.6%)

If so how:

On a business steering group to look at improvements	19 (34.5%)
Taking part in a detailed consultation meeting following surveys	16 (29.1%)
Attending regular informal networking events with other businesses.....	28 (50.9%)
Sharing news through social media.....	25 (45.5%)
Helping to create or update a website	8 (14.5%)
Designing printed material.....	6 (10.9%)
Printing	5 (9.1%)
Other - please state	2 (100.0%)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.
Now please return it by XX /XX/16 to any business below:

Mark & Spencer, Customer Services, Ground Floor,
Doddle, Station Approach, Epsom
Town Hall, Reception, The Parade, Epsom
So Lippy, 45 Upper High Street, Epsom
The Stitch Mouse, 22 South Street, Epsom