

# DAREBIN BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS 2026



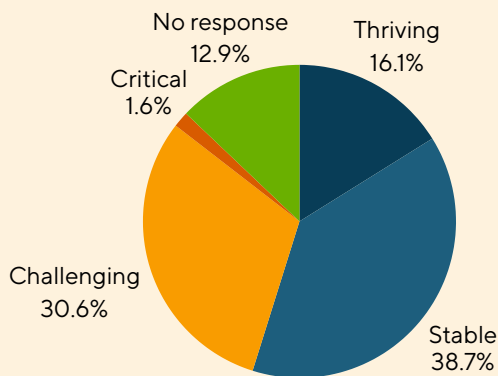
the place to live

## ☀ THE RESULTS ARE IN: OUR ANNUAL BUSINESS SURVEY

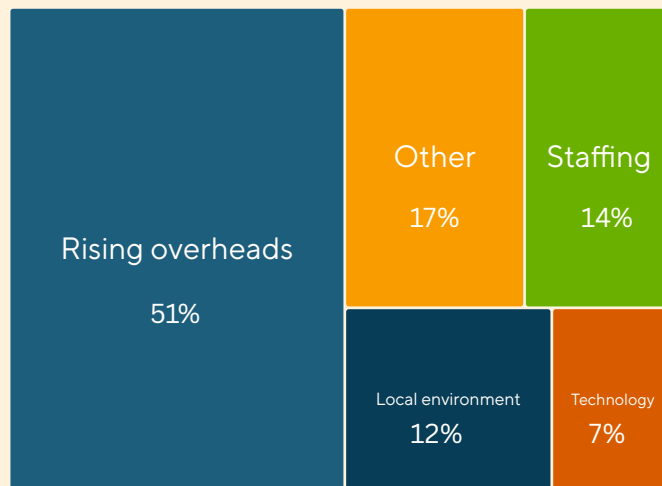
A huge thank you to the local small-to-medium businesses who shared their thoughts in our recent Business Survey! Between February and April 2026, we heard from a diverse range of industries about the challenges and triumphs of operating in today's climate.

We've gathered their top insights below—covering everything from current performance and insightful business initiatives to the specific ways Council can better support you. We're sharing these findings so you can see how your peers are navigating the year and pick up a few fresh ideas for your own business.

### Compared to last year, how is your business performing?



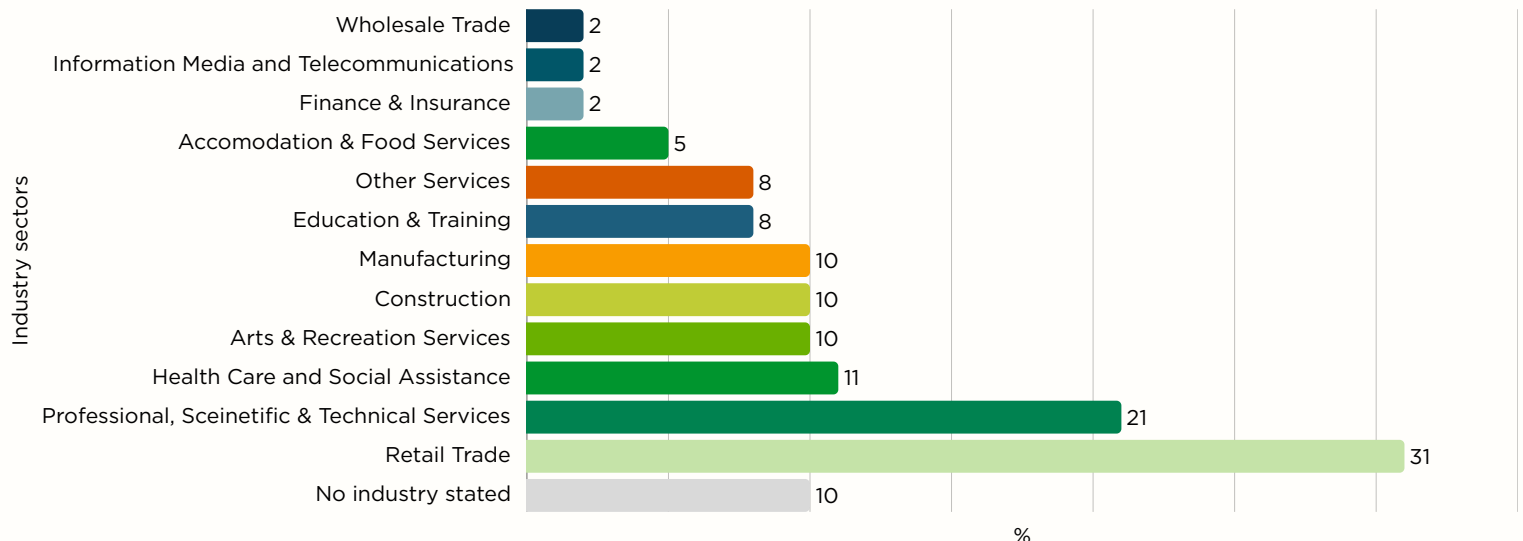
### Challenges affecting daily operations



### Other Comments:

- “Economy and cost of living”
- “Less purchasing power of clients, reducing revenue”
- “The general economy, rising interest rates and prices; less bookings”
- “Connecting with local business owners”

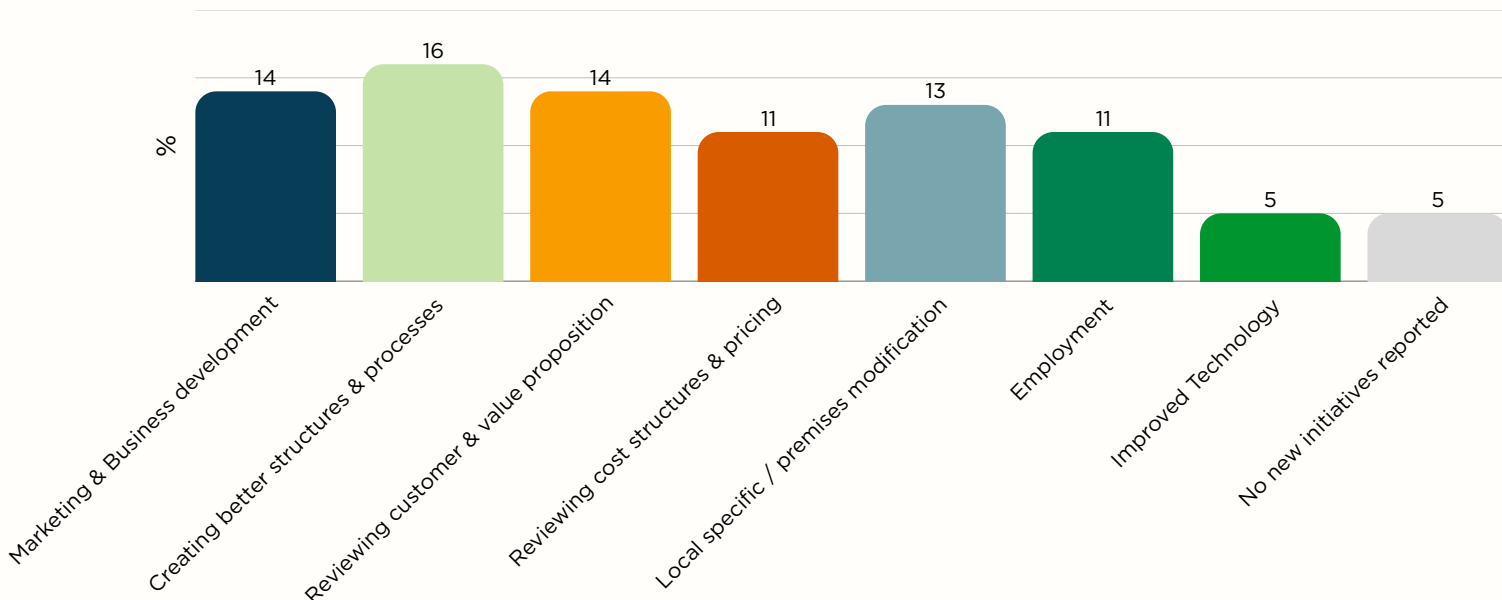
% of businesses that operate in the sector  
Multiple answers allowed



The majority of businesses who responded to the survey operate from Commercial or Industrial premises (72%) followed by Home-based /mobile or online (23%) and Coworking or shared studios (5%)

## % of businesses that implemented successful initiatives (by area of improvement)

See comments below



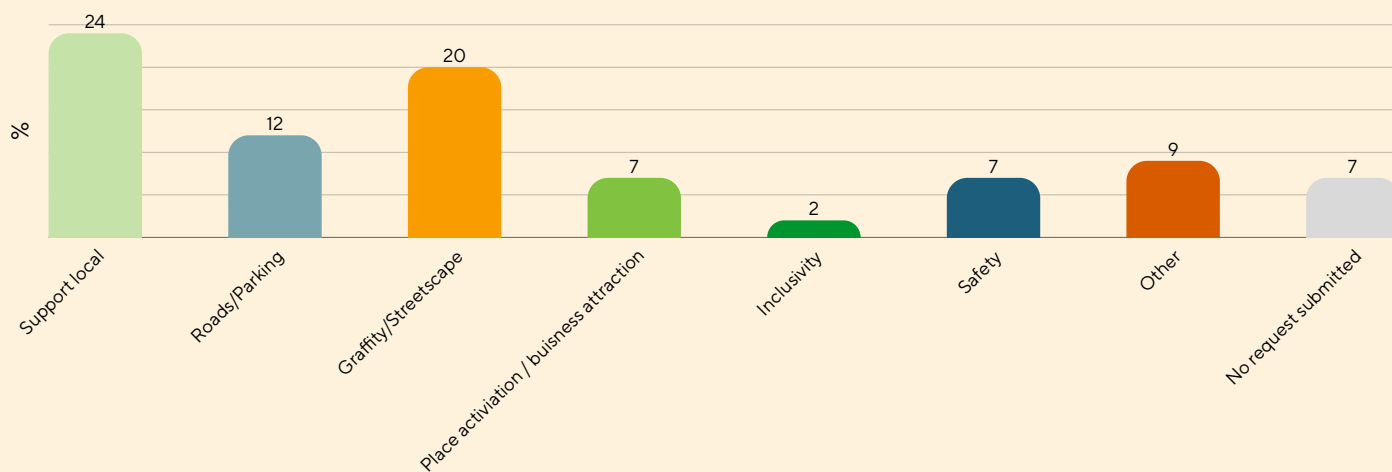
Types of initiatives

### ✶ A SELECTION OF INITIATIVES IMPLEMENTED BY BUSINESSES

- “Managing my workflow to reduce burnout, so I can continue to support my clients at a high level, while offering remote sessions to help maintain the quality of my in-person work.”
- “I concentrated on attracting and doing more business in my local area than all over Melbourne.”
- “Conducting a review of all expenditure, especially external contracts/ services and subscriptions. There were a lot of things I was overpaying for or there were better options.”

## % of businesses that requested improvements and council support

See comments below



Types of improvement

### ✶ A SELECTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL SUPPORT

- “Get to know your business day where perhaps in town hall businesses get together and exchange cards and network.”
- “Make our precinct a live music zone, protecting our main streets (our town squares) from the continuing, and obviously necessary developments.”
- “A free online community directory which lists local businesses and is shared and promoted to all Darebin residents to encourage them to support local small businesses.”

If you would like to tell us how we can better support your business, send us an email to [business@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:business@darebin.vic.gov.au) and use the subject heading “Darebin Business Survey 2026”

# LET'S KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING



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## ✦ JOIN OUR BUSINESS E NEWS - A MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Sign up for our dedicated business newsletter to be the first to hear about upcoming opportunities, grants, networking events and new Council initiatives.

[Sign Up Here](#)

## ✦ BUSINESS SKILLS WORKSHOPS

The 2026 Business Skills Workshop series, hosted jointly by Darebin and Merri-bek councils, are free workshops led by local industry experts.

**Please note:** These workshops are available only for businesses based in the Darebin and Merri-bek council areas. All workshops are free.

Visit our website to find out more:

[Business Skills Workshops](#)

## ✦ PLACEMAKING & ACTIVATING SPACES

As part of the [Active Spaces Program](#), we're delivering the **Active Windows Project**. The project involves installing artwork from Darebin locals onto the external windows of vacant shopfronts across Darebin. [Get in contact](#) to speak with a Darebin staff member about your vacant window.

## ✦ SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Join us for the launch of the Greening our Business tool.

**Where:** [Ceres Fair Food](#)

**When:** Friday 12 June - 7:15 am - 9:00 am

[Register here](#)

## ✦ DAREBIN ECONOMIC FUTURES NETWORK

The Darebin Economic Futures Network supports and connects businesses within Darebin through formal and informal networking opportunities. Follow us on Eventbrite to find out more.

[Follow us here](#)

Any questions or want to chat to our team, please email [business@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:business@darebin.vic.gov.au)