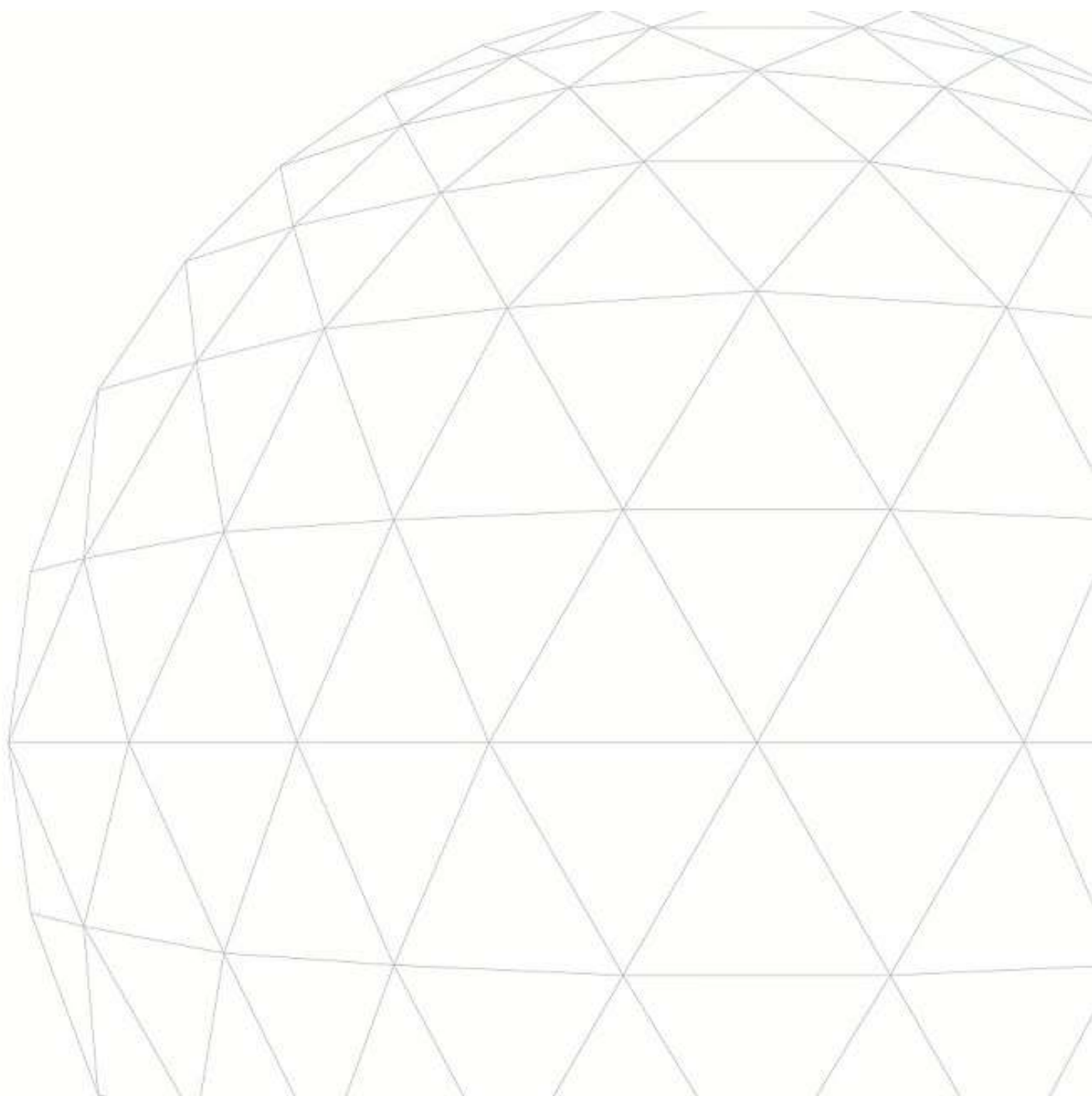




## **Brixton Business Survey Report 2014**

A Report to London Borough of Lambeth  
March 2015



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# 1.0 Introduction

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This report sets out the findings of the Brixton Business Survey 2014.

## 1.1 Study Objectives

London Borough of Lambeth Council and Brixton BID commissioned Ecorys to undertake a survey of businesses located in the Brixton area.

This survey therefore focuses on business owner's views on the changes taking place in Brixton and what more both Brixton BID and Lambeth Council can do to make sure that businesses benefit from what is happening and / or reduce any negative impact.

The council and Brixton BID intend to use the information garnered from the survey to develop short - medium term programmes to improve business performance, increase opportunities to benefit businesses and at the same time, reduce risks (where this is possible and affordable) of any negative impact of new developments. They will also use the results from the survey to review recent initiatives and help inform future work in the area.

Topics covered in the survey include views on the local area as a place to run a business, business turnover, future objectives and challenges faced, awareness of Brixton BID, awareness and interest in business support, business ownership, employment and staff recruitment.

## 1.2 Methodology

Surveys were completed by telephone and face-to-face with business owners/managers within the Brixton area. Interviews lasted between 12 minutes and 1 hour with the average interview lasting around 30 minutes. A detailed methodology is provided as appendix 1 to this document.

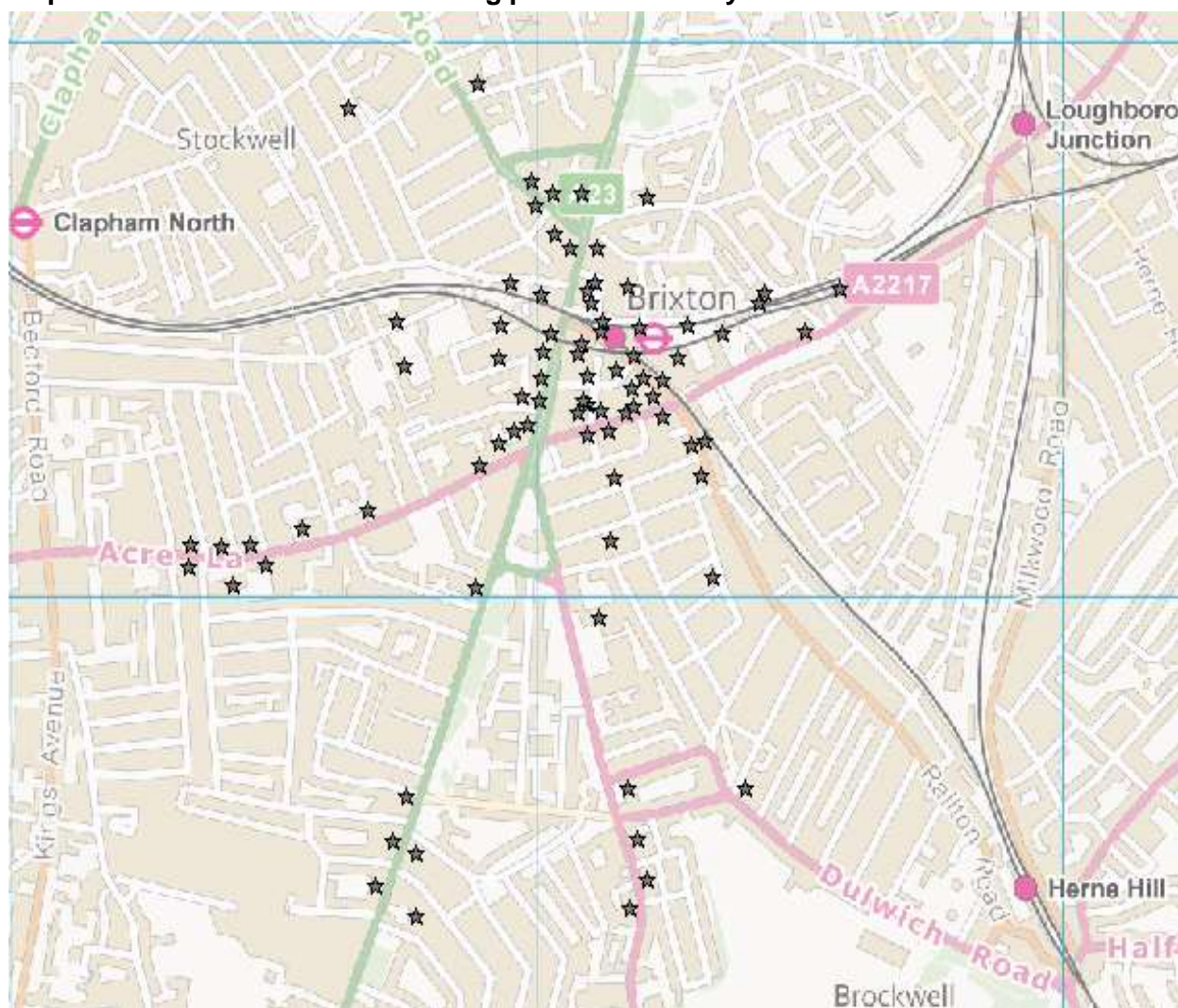
## 1.3 Sample

A total of 249 interviews were completed with businesses. 217 were completed by telephone and 32 were completed face-to-face. Due to the relatively small population size for the survey (670 business records), all businesses in the target area were invited to take part in the survey.

Due to ONS data on sector and size only being available at borough level, it is not possible to compare the profile of businesses in the sample achieved by business demographics of the Brixton area.

Map 1 below shows the location of businesses who took part in the survey.

**Map 1: Location of businesses taking part in the survey**



Interviews were completed with the business owner/manager to ensure accurate data was achieved.

Figure 1 details the breakdown of the sample achieved by sector.

**Figure 1 - Type of business**

	%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	45%
Accommodation and food service activities	14%
Other service activities	10%
Human Health and social work activities	6%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5%
Real estate activities	4%
Information and communication	4%
Administration and support service activities	4%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	3%
Financial and Insurance activities	2%
Manufacturing	2%
Construction	1%
Education	1%
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	0%

Base: 249

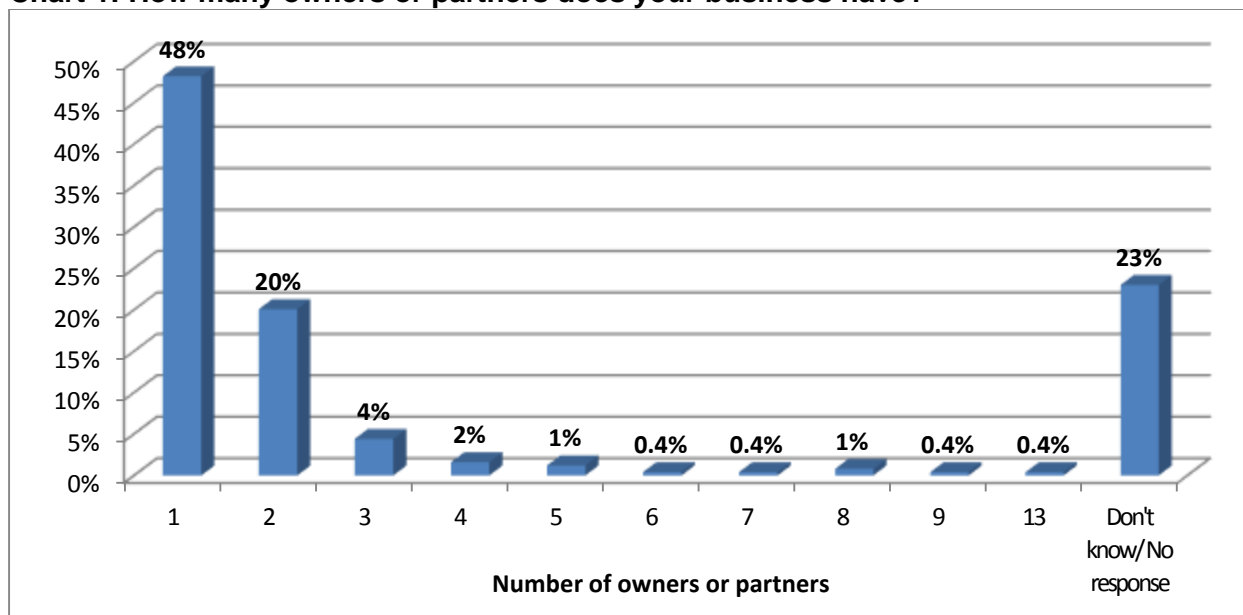
As shown, highest proportions of businesses surveyed were in the 'wholesale and retail' and 'accommodation and food service activities'.

It is not possible to compare the profile of businesses in the sample achieved by business demographics of the Brixton area as ONS data on sector and size is only available at borough level.

### Business Ownership

Businesses taking part in the survey claimed to have between 1 and 13 owners or partners, with highest proportions (68%) having either one or two.

**Chart 1: How many owners or partners does your business have?**



Base: 249

Overall, 64% of these owners/partners were male, whilst 36% were female.

The highest proportion of business owners/partners were white, with the second highest proportion being of Other/Mixed ethnicity.

**Figure 2 – Ethnicity of business owners/partners** *Majority ownership*

	%
White	27%
Black	13%
Asian	12%
Other/ Mixed	19%
No majority	4%
Don't know	25%

Base: 249

Some 4% of business had a least one disabled owner/partner.

**Figure 3 – How many of your owners/partners are disabled?**

	%
0	78%
1	4%
2	0.4%
Don't know	18%

Base: 249

In recording the proportion of their owners living within the London Borough of Lambeth, 37% claimed this to be none, whilst 29% claimed this to be one.

**Figure 4 – How many of the business owner(s)/partner(s) live within the Borough of Lambeth**

Number of business owners/partners	%
0	37%
1	29%
2	11%
3	4%
6	<1%
7	<1%
Don't know/refused	17%

*Base: 249*

## 1.4 Structure of Report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides a summary of the main findings of the research.
- Section 3 presents the detailed findings of the research, with findings illustrated through tables and charts as appropriate.
- Section 4 provides conclusions and recommendations for the future

## 2.0 Summary of Main Findings

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### 2.1 Location and views on the Brixton area

- *Of the businesses that took part in the survey, 53% had been trading at their current location for more than 10 years.*
- *57% of businesses had been trading in Brixton for 10 years or more.*
- *65% rated their current location to be 'good' or 'very good' as a place to run a business.*
- *Positive aspects of the location include it being a good location to do business as it is close to central London and it's lively and diverse community.*
- *61% claim the area around their business to have improved over the last 3 years with this most frequently including references to more people coming/ moving into the area, new business moving into the area and the area being a safer environment.*

### 2.2 Employment and Recruitment

- *One quarter of businesses surveyed had seen an increase in the number of employees at their premises in the last 12 months whilst 8% claimed employee numbers to have decreased.*
- *Among businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds a significantly higher proportion referred to the number of employees having decreased over this period (27% compared with 8% overall).*
- *35% of businesses planned to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months whilst 37% did not plan to do so.*
- *Nearly two-thirds of businesses in Brixton claim to make a particular effort to recruit staff locally.*
- *Businesses in the 'Accommodation/ Food' sector were twice as likely as businesses in 'Wholesale/ Retail', 'Office/ Admin' or 'Other' to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months.*

### 2.3 Business Performance and Market Area

- *27% of surveyed businesses in Brixton claimed their turnover to have increased in the last 12 months. 31% claimed their turnover had remained stable, with 17% reporting a decrease over this period.*
- *Over the last 12 months, on average, 50% of sales of goods and services was to customers based in Brixton whilst 17% was to customers elsewhere in Lambeth.*

- *On average, in the last 12 months only 18% of purchases of goods and services came from suppliers based in Brixton whilst 8% was from suppliers elsewhere in Lambeth.*
- *44% of businesses in Brixton state their long term objective to be to grow slowly and gradually get bigger.*
- *Increasing sales, profitability and reducing costs are the most frequent objectives for businesses over the next 12 months.*
- *In discussing key challenges for businesses, highest proportions referred to parking, competition in the market place and costs.*
- *44% of businesses in Brixton were not aware of any business support services.*
- *Of those that were aware, highest proportions were aware of and would consider utilising marketing and branding business support services and business support services aimed at improving online presence.*

## 2.4 The Brixton BID

- *69% of businesses who took part in the survey were aware of the Brixton Bid.*
- *Awareness of the Brixton BID is highest among businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds.*
- *Highest proportions of businesses were aware of the reduced rates on recycling offered by First Mile Ltd (39%).*
- *Only 12% of businesses attended or were part of a Business Network.*

## 2.5 Impacts of Town Centre developments on business performance

- *The changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on approximately half of businesses. Only 12% of those surveyed claimed that the changes were having a negative effect on their business.*
- *Businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds more frequently referred to changes in Brixton having a positive effect on their business, with those majority owned by those from Asian backgrounds more frequently reporting negative impacts.*
- *Where businesses had said that the changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on their business, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that the changes have encouraged more affluent customers and visitors to visit Brixton now.*
- *Two-thirds of businesses anticipate that a regeneration of Brixton Town Centre will have a positive effect on Brixton business performance in the future.*

## 3.0 Research Findings

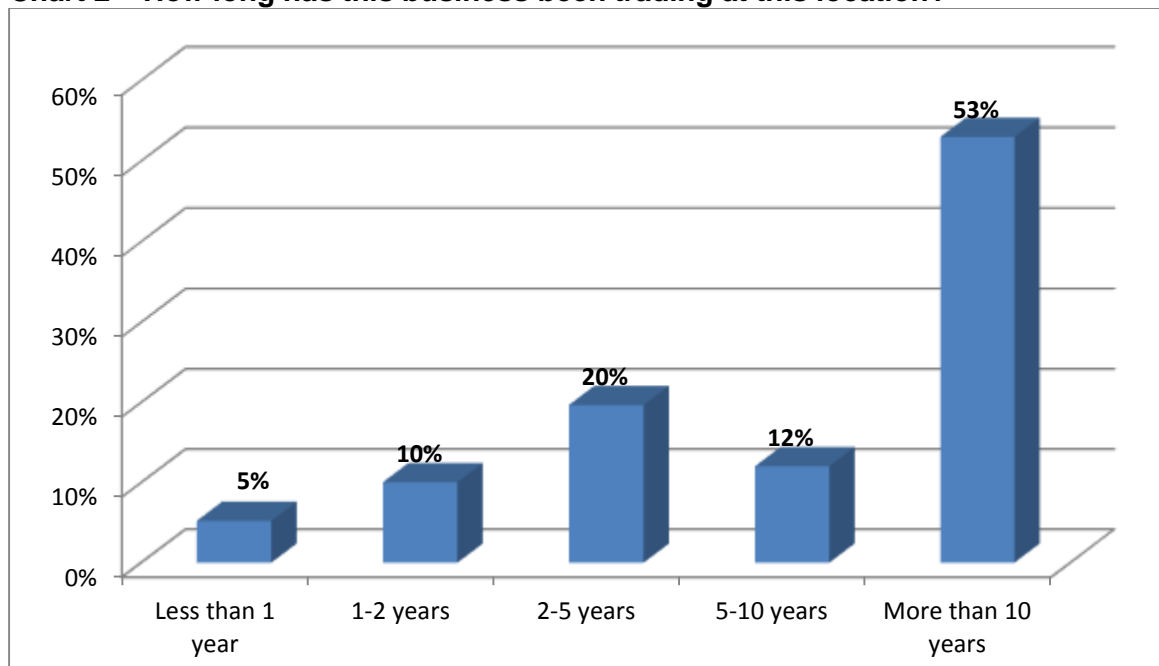
This section sets out the detailed findings of the survey.

### 3.1 Location and views on the Brixton area

- *Some 53% of businesses in Brixton had been trading at their current location for more than 10 years.*
- *57% of businesses had been trading in Brixton for 10 years or more.*
- *65% rated their current location to be 'good' or 'very good' as a place to run a business.*
- *Positive aspects of the location included it being a good location to do business as it is close to central London and it's lively and diverse community .*
- *61% claim the area around their business to have improved over the last 3 years with this most frequently including references to more people coming/ moving into the area, new business moving into the area and the area being a safer environment.*

Highest proportions of businesses had been trading at their current location for more than 10 years.

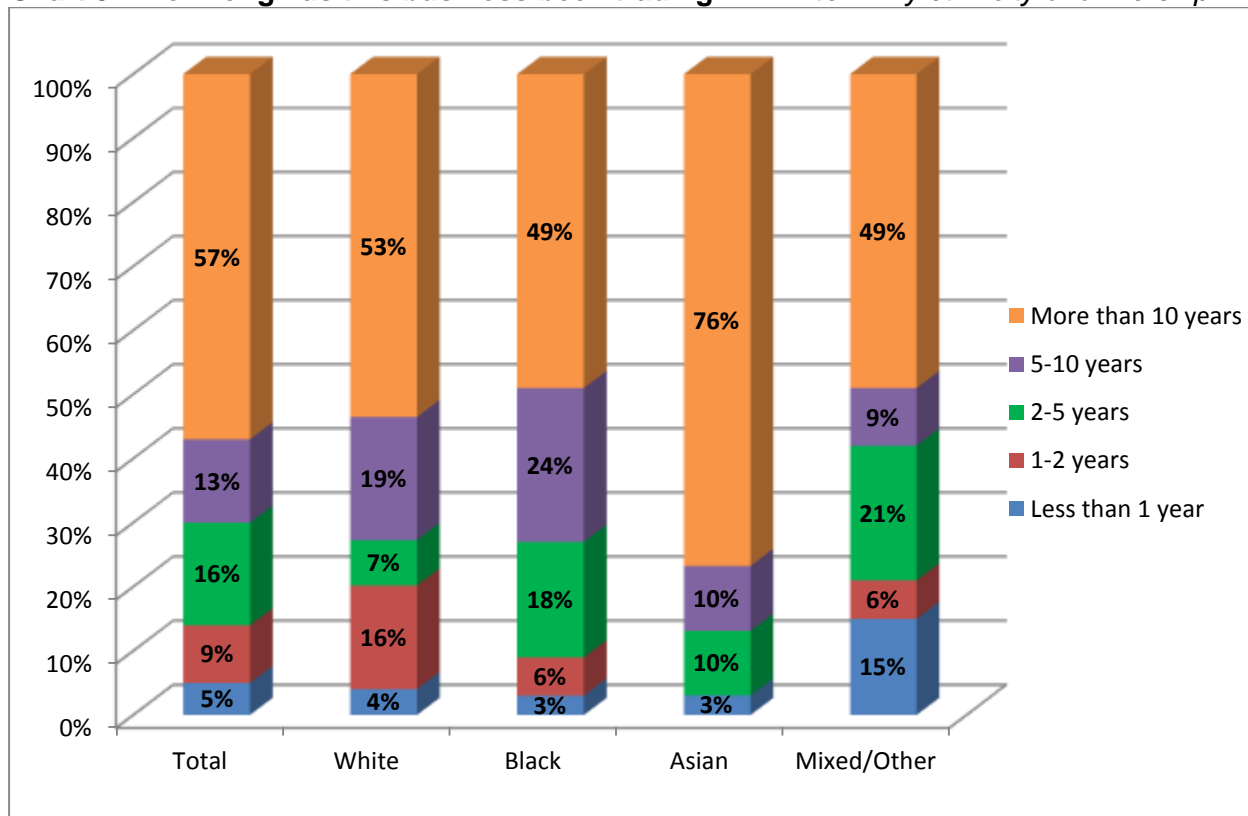
**Chart 2 – How long has this business been trading at this location?**



Base: 249

This pattern follows in considering the length of time they had been trading in Brixton overall.

**Chart 3 – How long has this business been trading in Brixton? *By ethnicity of ownership***



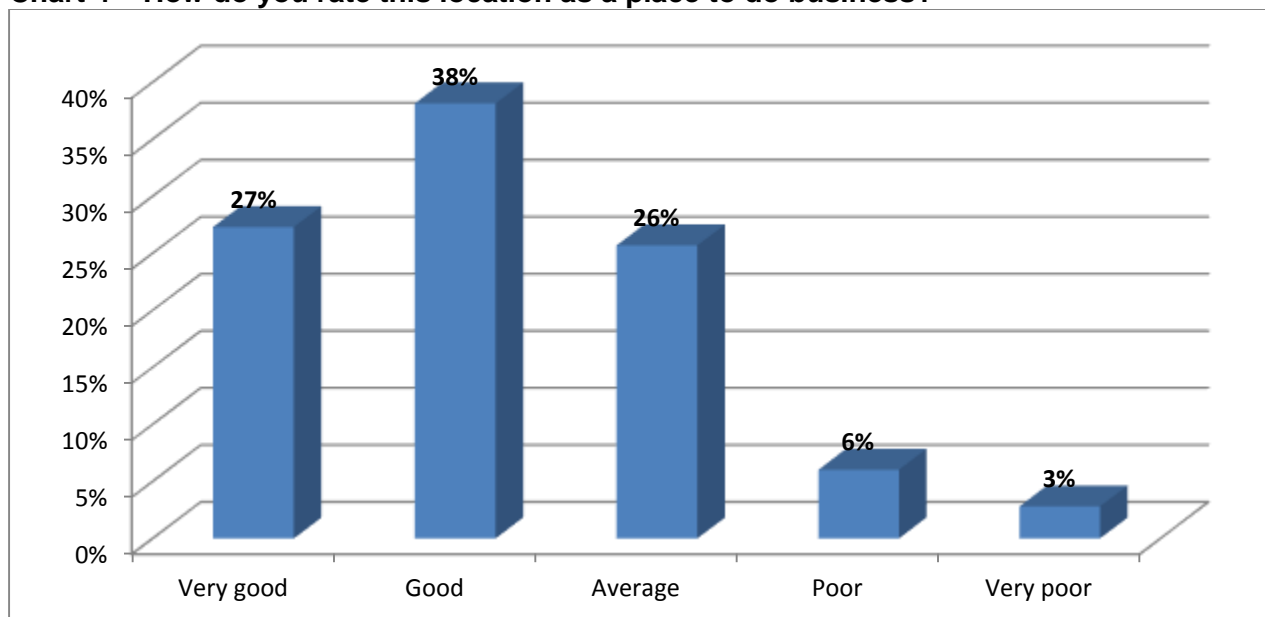
Base: 249

From the chart it can be seen that 14% of businesses taking part in the survey had been trading in Brixton for less than 2 years, whilst 57% had been trading for more than 10 years.

As shown, businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds are the most established with 76% of these having been trading in Brixton for more than 10 years. The 5% overall having set up or moved into Brixton within the last year include 15% of those whose majority ownership is from other or mixed race ethnic origins.

Some 65% of businesses in Brixton rated their current location as a 'good' or 'very good' place to run a business. 9% of businesses in Brixton rated their current location as 'poor' or 'very poor' in terms of doing business.

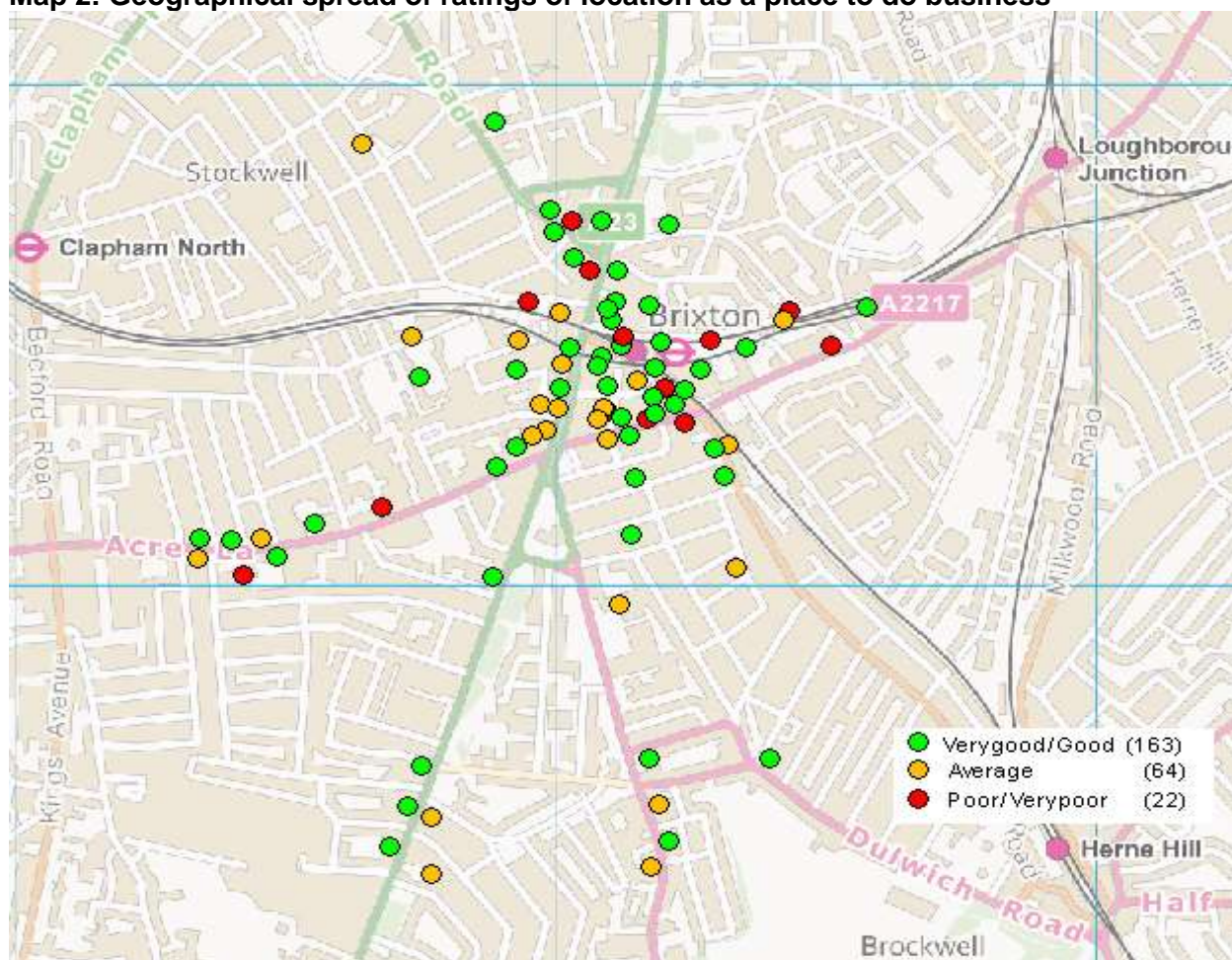
**Chart 4 – How do you rate this location as a place to do business?**



Base: 249

Map 2 shows the geographical spread of these ratings.

**Map 2: Geographical spread of ratings of location as a place to do business**



Businesses rating their current location as 'good' or 'very good' most frequently referred to it being a good location to do business as it is close to central London. Businesses also highlighted more people coming into/moving into the area and the lively and diverse community as reasons for rating their location as 'good' or 'very good'.

**Figure 5 – Reasons for rating the area as 'good' or 'very good' as a place to do business**

	%
Good location to do business, close to central London	39%
More people are coming/moving into the area	17%
Lively and diverse community	17%
Lots of regular and new customers	14%
Good transport links	13%
It's an up and coming area	8%
Cheaper than other areas in London to do business	1%

*Base: respondents rating area as 'good' or 'very good' - 163*

Those rating their current location as 'poor' or 'very poor' most frequently referred to the lack of parking being an issue as it affects passing trade, and that business is slow.

**Figure 6 – Reasons for rating the area as 'poor' or 'very poor' as a place to do business**

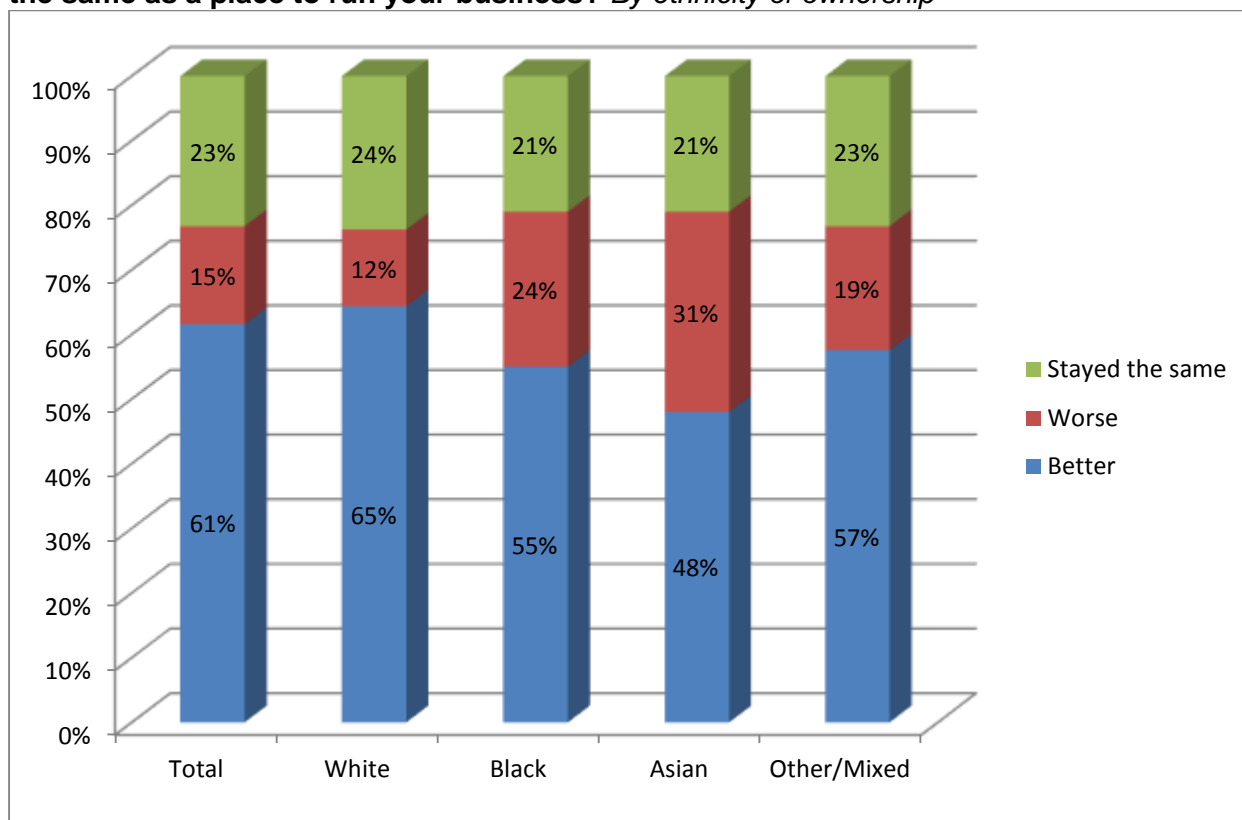
	%
Lack of parking is an issue - affects passing trade	32%
Business is slow	23%
Costs are too high	9%
Crime is a problem/ bad reputation	9%
Lots of unemployment/ people have less money	9%
Competition has increased	9%
More people are coming/moving into the area	5%

*Base: respondents rating area as 'poor' or 'very poor' – 22*

Costs being too high, crime/ bad reputation, unemployment/ less money and increase in competition were also referred to as negative aspects of the area.

Encouragingly, two-fifths of businesses (61%) involved in the survey claimed that Brixton had got better as a place to run a business over the last three years. Around one quarter of businesses felt that it had stayed the same whilst 15% thought it had got worse.

**Chart 5 – Over the past three years, do you think Brixton has got better, worse or stayed the same as a place to run your business? By ethnicity of ownership**

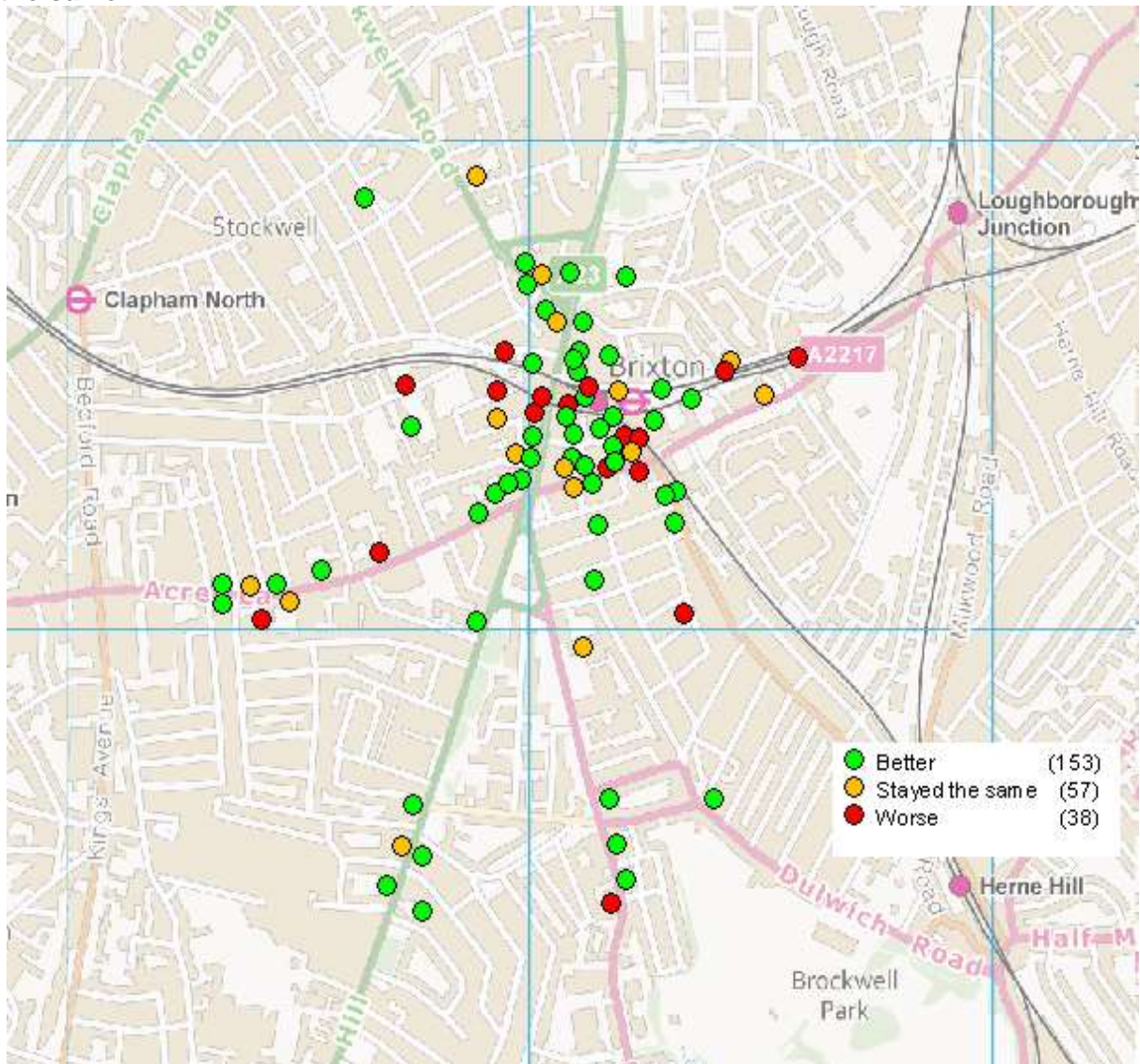


Base: 249

As shown, businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds more frequently referred to the area having got better as a place to run a business with those with Black and Asian ownership more frequently suggesting the area to have got worse.

Map 3 overleaf depicts the location of businesses referring to the area having got better, worse or stayed the same.

**Map 3: Locations of businesses referring to the area having got better, worse or stayed the same**



In considering the ways in which businesses felt Brixton had improved as a place to run a businesses, equal proportions of 25% referred to more people coming/ moving into the area, new business moving into the area and the area being a safer environment now with less crime.

In considering the ways in which businesses felt Brixton had got worse as a place to run a businesses, two-thirds (67%) referred to a lack of parking affecting passing trade whilst one-third (33%) referred to business declining.

In considering what is particularly good about doing business in Brixton, highest proportions referred to the lively and diverse community with the second highest referring to lots of regular customers and a rise in new/younger customers.

**Figure 7 – What is particularly good about doing business in Brixton?**

	%
Lively and diverse community	27%
Lots of regular customers and a rise in new/younger customers	24%
It's a good location, close to amenities and central London	19%
Near to good transport links	14%
New businesses opening bringing new customers	3%
Maintaining business growth in the area	3%

Base: 249

In considering the main challenges of doing business in Brixton, highest proportions referred to a lack of parking facilities (25%). Almost one-fifth (19%) referred to anti-social behaviour, crime, poor security and a bad reputation.

**Figure 8 – What are the main challenges of doing business in Brixton?**

	%
Lack of parking facilities	25%
Anti-social behaviour, crime, poor security, bad reputation	19%
There's a lot of competition	12%
Coping with increasing costs due to regeneration	12%
To keep my business going, attracting new customers	10%
There are no challenges to doing business in Brixton	6%
Low standards of service from the council	5%
Littering and poor rubbish collection	5%

Base: 249

**Figure 9 – Challenges of doing business in Brixton Word Cloud**



In considering what employees value about Brixton, 27% referred to it being a diverse, lively area and the shops whilst a similar percentage (25%) referred to the lively and diverse community. Others referred to the good transport links (13%), Brixton being a nice place to live and work (10%), its proximity to Central London (6%), Brixton being an up and coming area (5%) and the great nightlife and abundance of restaurants (4%).

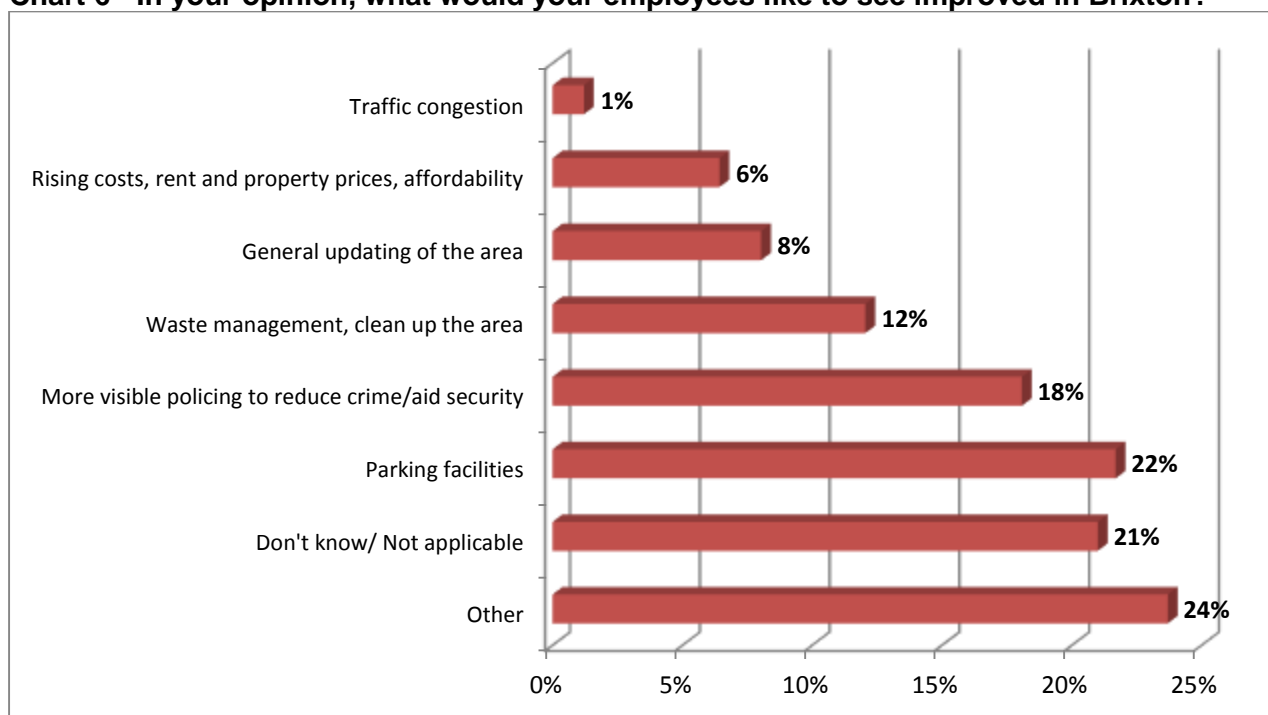
**Figure 10 – In your opinion, what do your employees value about Brixton?**

	%
Diverse and lively area and shops	27%
Lively and diverse community	25%
Good transport links	13%
Nice place to live and work	10%
Close to central London	6%
It's an up and coming area	5%
Great nightlife and lots of restaurants	4%
Other	18%
Don't know	8%

Base: 249

Businesses suggested that the main improvements that their employees would like to see in Brixton would be to parking facilities (22%) closely followed by more visible policing to reduce crime and aid security (18%).

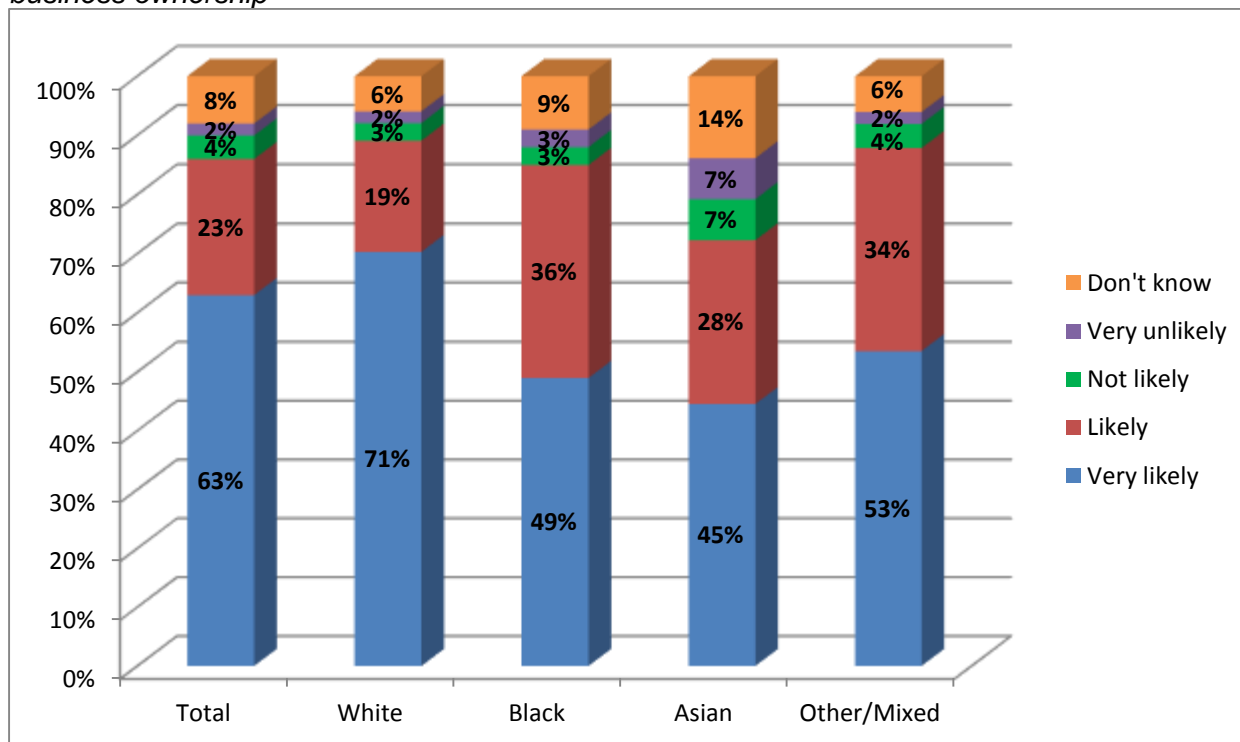
**Chart 6 - In your opinion, what would your employees like to see improved in Brixton?**



Base: 249

Nearly two-thirds of businesses (63%) said they would be very likely to still to be trading in Brixton in 3 years time whilst a further 23% said this would be likely. Only 6% of businesses would be unlikely or very unlikely to still be trading in Brixton in 3 years time.

**Chart 7 - How likely are you to still to be trading in Brixton in 3 years time? By ethnicity of business ownership**



Base: 249

As shown, the 6% overall suggesting they are not likely or very unlikely to be trading in Brixton in 3 years time included 14% of businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds.

Businesses who were very likely or likely to still be trading in Brixton in 3 years time most frequently referred to them being well established in Brixton with lots of regular customers (31%), then having no intention of moving (26%) and Brixton being a great place to do business with potential for growth (19%).

**Figure 11 – Reasons for being very likely or likely to still be trading in Brixton in 3 years time**

	%
We're well established here with lots of regular customers	31%
No intention on moving	26%
It's a great place to do business, potential for growth	19%
Head office decision	4%
Rent and rates are reasonable	1%
Other	17%
Don't know	2%

Base: respondents who were very likely or likely (213)

Businesses who were very unlikely or not likely to still be trading in Brixton in 3 years time most frequently referred to their business declining (33%) and ever increasing costs (20%).

**Figure 12 – Reasons for being very unlikely or not likely to still be trading in Brixton in 3 years time**

	%
Business is declining	33%
Ever increasing costs	20%
Don't know	0%

*Base: respondents who were very unlikely or not likely (15)*

Businesses were asked if they were to relocate, where would they relocate too. The highest proportion of businesses (44%) stated that they had no plans to relocate. 14% would relocate to somewhere else in London whilst 8% would relocate to somewhere very close to their current property in Brixton.

**Figure 13 – If you were to relocate, where would you relocate to?**

	%
No plans to relocate	44%
Elsewhere in London	14%
Somewhere very close by in Brixton	8%
It depends on costs	1%
Head Office decision	6%
Don't know	14%
Other	15%

*Base: 228*

## 3.2 Employment and Recruitment

- *One quarter of businesses had seen an increase in the number of employees at their premises in the last 12 months whilst 8% claimed employee numbers to have decreased.*
- *35% of businesses planned to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months whilst 37% did not plan to do so.*
- *Nearly two-thirds of businesses in Brixton claim to make a particular effort to recruit staff locally.*
- *Businesses in the 'Accommodation/ Food' sector were twice as likely as businesses in 'Wholesale/ Retail', 'Office/ Admin' or 'Other' to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months.*

### 3.2.1 Employment

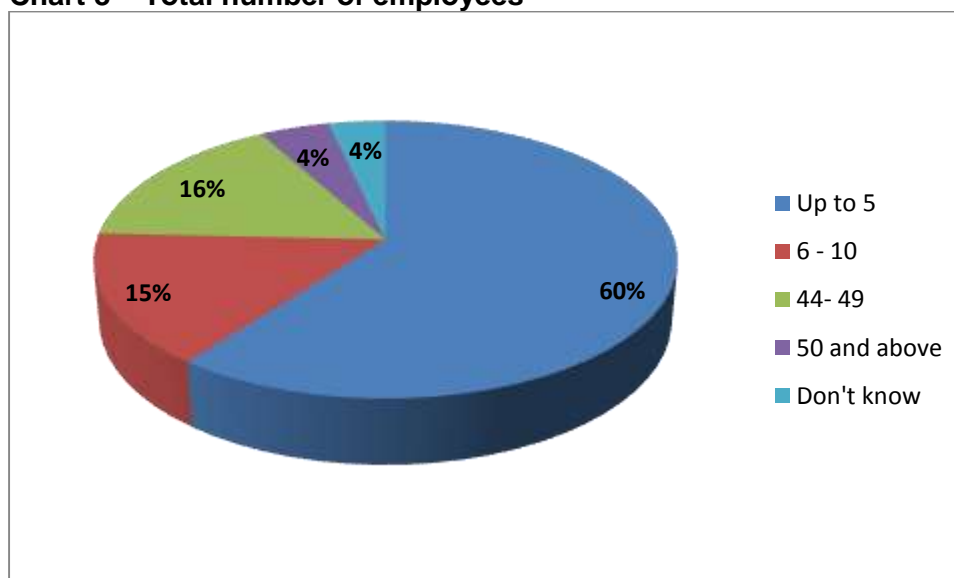
**Figure 14 – Number of part-time and full-time staff**

Brixton	Range	Average
Full-time	0-52	5.2
Part-time	0-125	6.2

Base: 249

As shown, businesses in Brixton had a slightly lower average number of full-time employees than part-time employees with averages of 5.2 and 6.2 respectively.

**Chart 8 – Total number of employees**



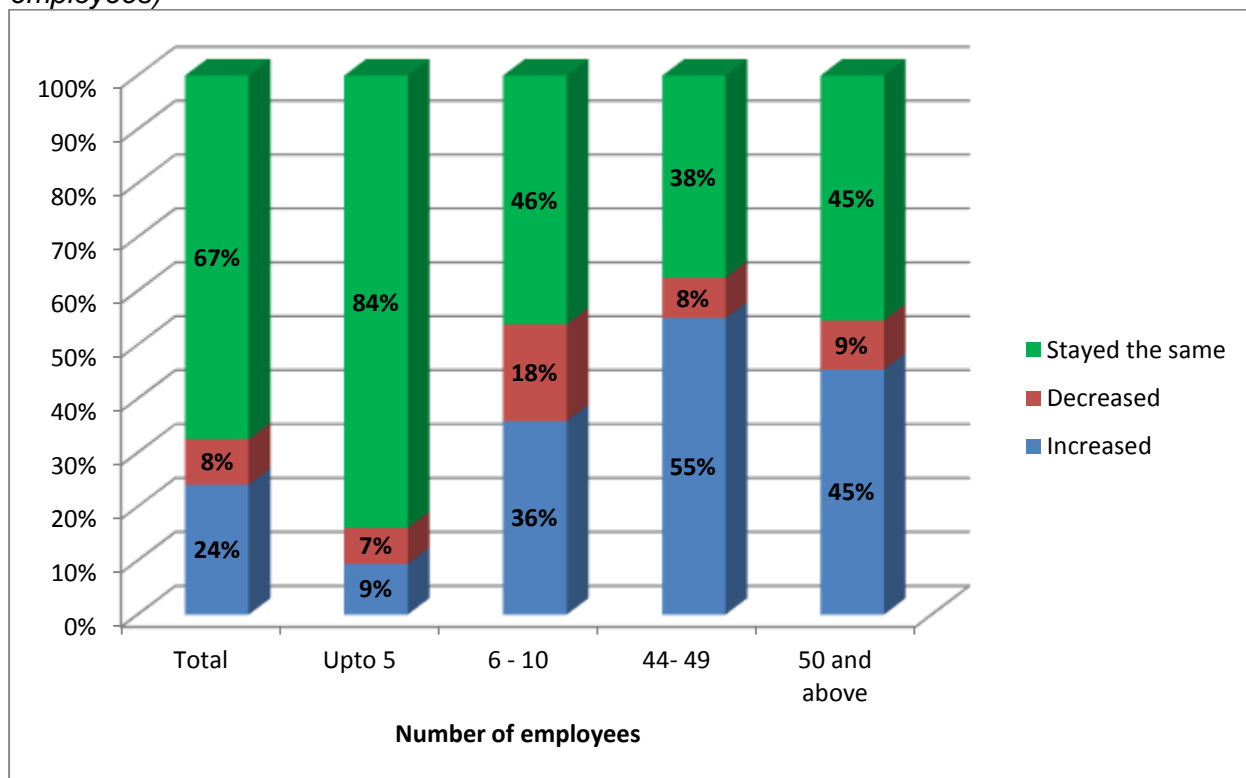
Base: 249

The majority of businesses had up to 5 employees (60%).

Almost one quarter of businesses (24%) in Brixton that were part of the survey had seen an increase in the number of employees at their premises in the last 12 months. 67% claimed that this had remained stable whilst 8% of businesses in Brixton claimed employee numbers to have decreased.

Looking at this data by business size (number of employees), it can be seen that larger companies were more likely to have seen an increase in employees than smaller companies. However, similar decreases in employee numbers were seen for both very small companies with up to 5 employees (7% decrease) and larger companies with 50 and above employees (9% decrease).

**Chart 9 – Over the last 12 months, has the total number of employees at these premises increased, decreased or stayed the same? Broken down by company size (number of employees)**



Base: 249

Businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds had also more frequently seen an increase in employee numbers over the last 12 months (28% compared with 24% overall). Among businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds a significantly higher proportion referred to the number of employees having decreased over this period (27% compared with 8% overall), whilst those majority owned by Asian backgrounds most frequently claimed employee numbers to have remained stable.

**Figure 15 – Over the last 12 months has the total number of employees at these premises increased, decreased or stayed the same?**

	<b>Total 249 %</b>	<b>White 68 %</b>	<b>Black 33 %</b>	<b>Asian 29 %</b>	<b>Other/Mixed 47 %</b>
Increased	24%	28%	18%	14%	11%
Decreased	8%	3%	27%	10%	2%
Stayed the same	68%	69%	55%	76%	87%

Base: 249

Businesses whose total number of employees had increased most frequently referred to the reason for this being an increase in sales/ business growth.

**Figure 16 – Reasons for total number of employees increasing**

	<b>%</b>
Increase in sales, business growth	75%

Base: business whose total number of employees had increased - 59

Businesses whose total number of employees had decreased most frequently referred to the reason for this being a decline in sales (52%) and competition (10%).

**Figure 17 – Reasons for total number of employees decreasing**

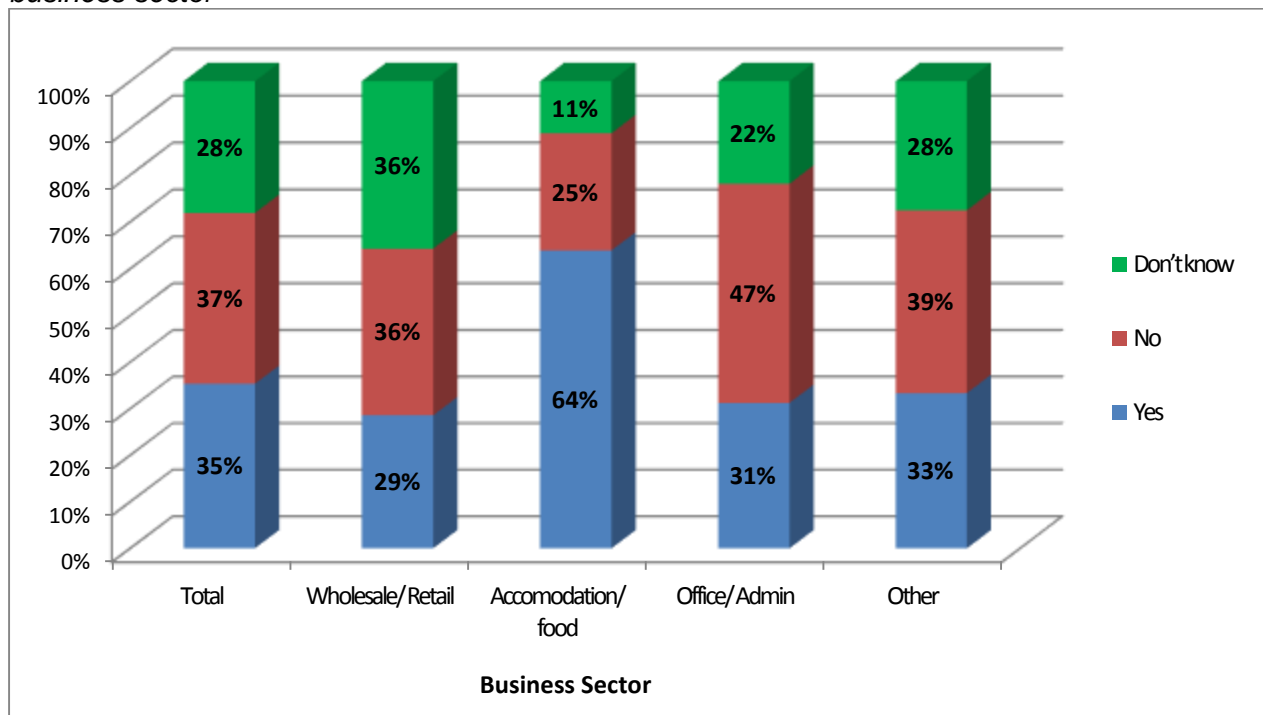
	<b>%</b>
Decline in sales	52%
Competition	10%
Difficult to recruit when staff leave	5%

Base: business whose total number of employees had increased - 21

Positively, 35% of businesses planned to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months. 37% did not plan to do so, whilst 28% did not know. Interestingly, despite businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds having seen the highest decrease in employment over the last 12 months, these businesses were the most positive about recruiting additional staff in the next 12 months (39% compared with 35% overall).

Businesses in the 'Accommodation/Food' sector were twice as likely as businesses in 'Wholesale/ Retail', 'Office/ Admin' or 'Other' to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months (64% compared to 29%, 31% and 33% respectively).

**Chart 10 - Do you plan to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months?** *Broken down by business sector*



Base: 249

**Figure 18 – Proportion of staff living within Borough of Lambeth**

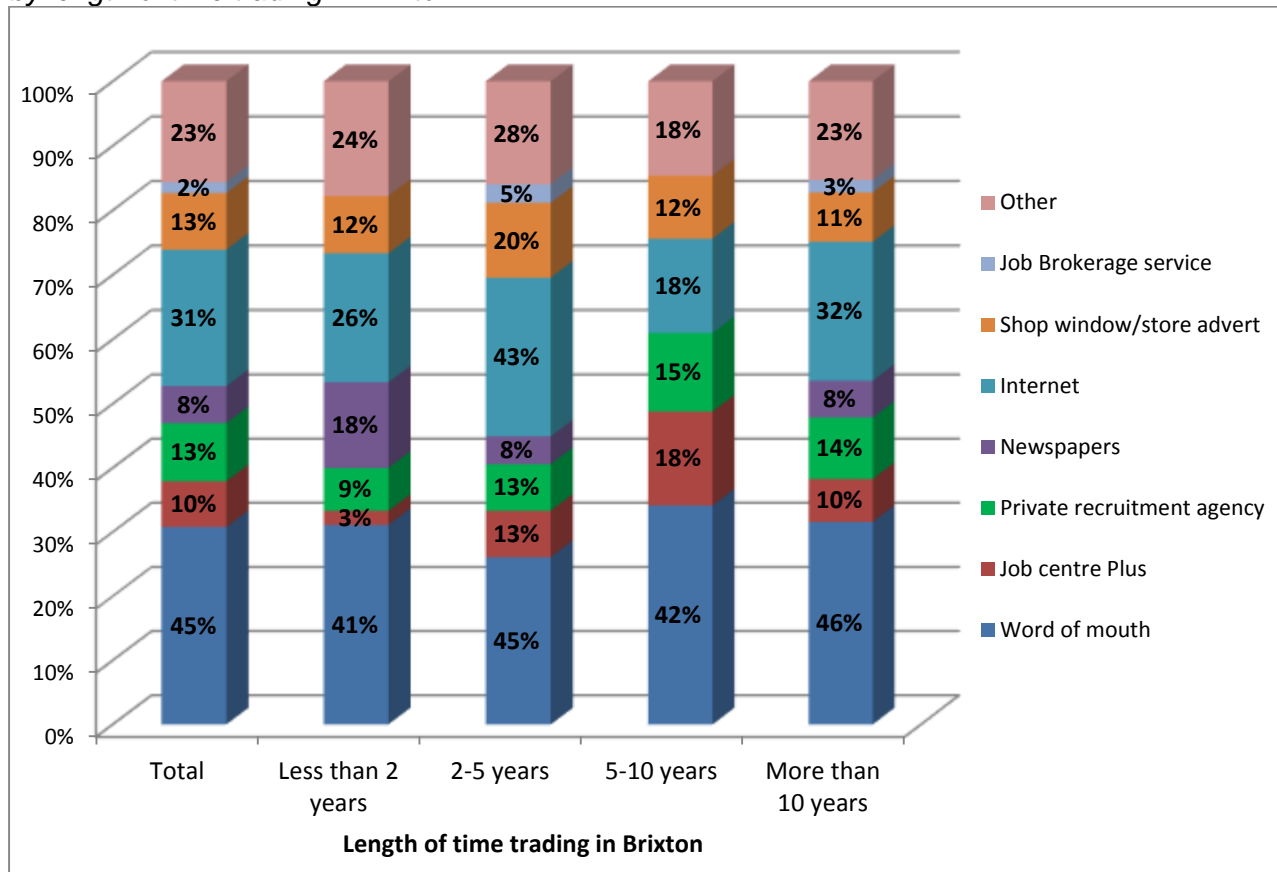
	Range	Average
Brixton	0 – 100%	50%

Base: 249

On average, half of employees of businesses based in Brixton live within the borough. As may be expected, the proportion of local employees ranged from none to 100%.

Businesses used a variety of means to recruit staff. The highest proportion (45%) used word of mouth whilst the second highest proportion (31%) used the internet.

**Chart 11 - When you recruit staff, what methods of recruitment do you use? Broken down by length of time trading in Brixton**



Base: 249

Those that had used Jobcentre Plus and/or a Job Brokerage Service were asked about experience of local or government recruitment agencies such as local job brokerages or Jobcentre Plus. 26% of businesses thought that the job centre send too many unqualified candidates to businesses whilst another 26% thought that they were okay.

**Figure 19 – What is your experience of local or government recruitment agencies such as local job brokerages or Jobcentre Plus?**

	%
Job centre send too many unqualified candidates	26%
They're okay	26%
Very good, they send us a lot of applicants	16%
Other	13%

Base: Respondents who had used Jobcentre Plus and/or a Job Brokerage Service – 31

Three-fifths of businesses in Brixton (59%) would use a free local recruitment service as long as it was responsive to their human resources requirements and supplied them with high quality candidates whilst 41% would not.

**Figure 20 – Would you use a free local recruitment service as long as it was responsive to your human resources requirements and supplied you with high quality candidates?**

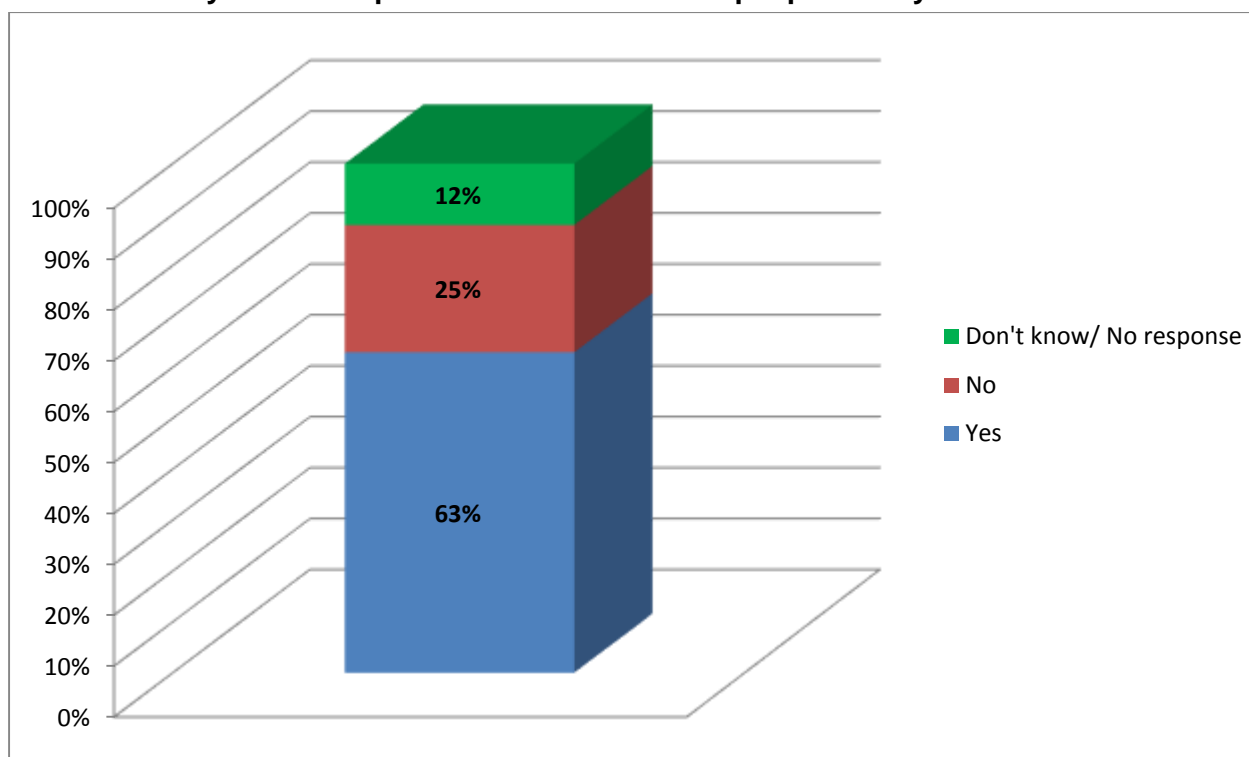
	Total 249 %	White 68 %	Black 33 %	Asian 29 %	Other/Mixed 47 %
Yes	59%	56%	79%	59%	66%
No	41%	44%	21%	41%	34%

Base: 249

As shown, interest in this service is highest among businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds.

Some 63% of businesses in Brixton claim to make a particular effort to recruit staff locally.

**Chart 12 – Do you make a particular effort to recruit people locally?**



Base: 249

As shown, one in four businesses claimed not to make particular effort to recruit local people.

Businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic origins most frequently claimed to make particular effort to recruit local people (70% compared with 54% of White, 66% of Asian and 68% of Mixed/Other owned businesses).

In a number of cases, the reason for not making particular effort to recruit local people was that the businesses have to recruit people with specialist skills.

**Figure 21 – Reasons for not recruiting local people**

	%
We have to recruit people with specialist skills	45%
We do recruit locally if they have the right skills	18%
We recruit from everywhere, we don't mind where they're from	10%
N/A - no employees	8%
We don't recruit often so hard to say	2%

*Base: Respondents who do not make particular effort to recruit local people – 62*

Businesses were also asked what would encourage them to employ local people. The highest proportion of businesses (47%) would employ local people if they had the necessary skills.

**Figure 22 – What would encourage you to employ local people?**

	%
If they had the necessary skills	47%
Nothing	15%
N/A - no employees	2%

*Base: Respondents who do not make particular effort to recruit local people – 62*

### 3.3 Business Performance and Market Areas

Businesses were asked a series of questions regarding their business turnover and market areas.

- *27% of businesses in Brixton claimed their turnover to have increased in the last 12 months. 31% claimed their turnover had remained stable, with 17% reporting a decrease over this period.*
- *Over the last 12 months, on average, 50% of sales of goods and services was to customers based in Brixton whilst 17% was to customers elsewhere in Lambeth.*
- *On average, in the last 12 months only 18% of purchases of goods and services came from suppliers based in Brixton whilst 8% was from suppliers elsewhere in Lambeth.*

#### 3.3.1 Business Turnover

Approximately one in ten businesses claimed their annual turnover to be below £50,000 whilst for another one in ten this was £50,001-£100,000.

**Figure 23 – Into which of the following bands does your company's current annual turnover at these premises fall?**

	%
Less than £50,000	10%
£50,001-£100,000	10%
£100,001-£200,000	8%
£200,001-£300,000	6%
£300,001-£400,000	3%
£400,001-£500,000	2%
£500,001-£750,000	5%
£750,001-£1million	3%
£1million+ - £1.5million	2%
£1.5million+ - £2million	1%
£2million+ - £2.5million	0%
£2.5million+ - £3million	2%
More than £3million	3%
Don't know/refused	45%

Base: 249

In considering change in their business turnover in the last 12 months, approximately one in four businesses were unable or unwilling to say. Some 31% claimed their turnover had remained stable over this period, with 27% of businesses referring to increases in turnover.

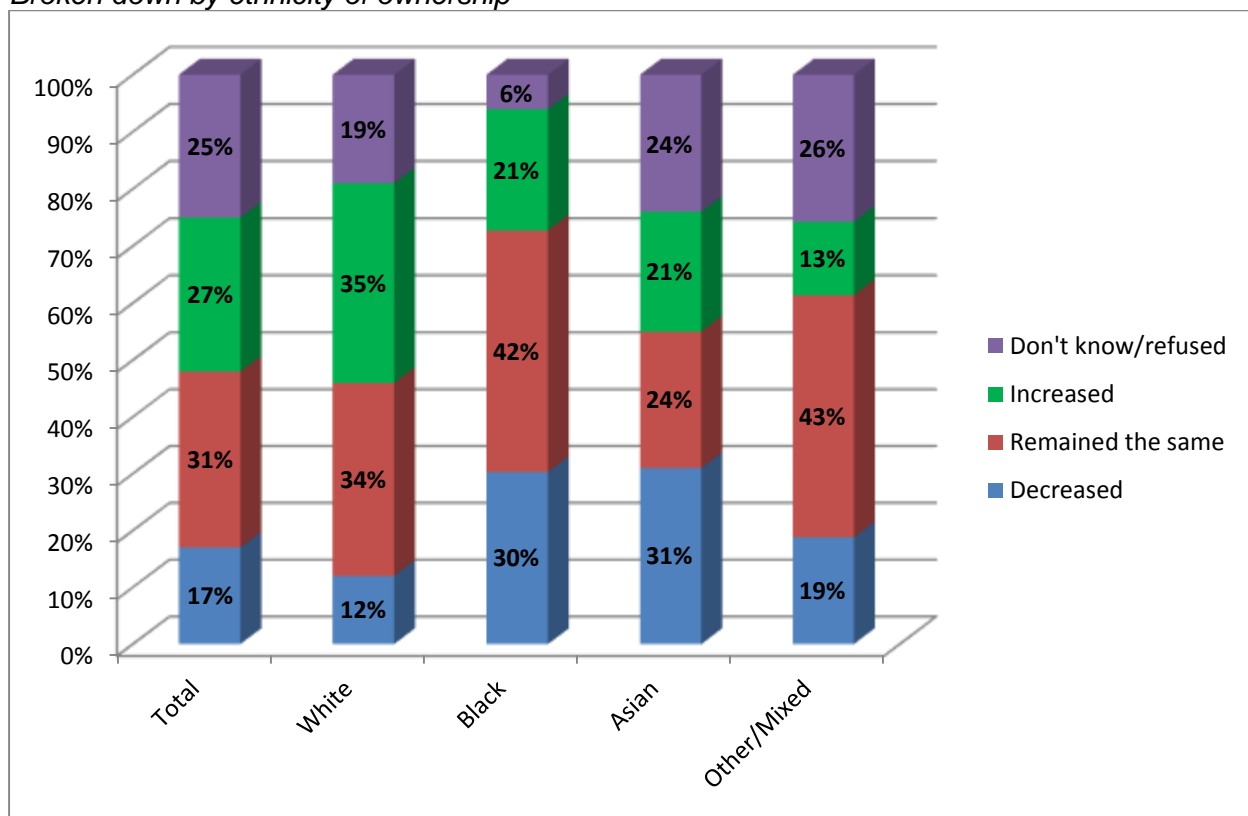
**Figure 24 – In comparison to 12 months ago, has the total turnover of this business...?**

	%
Increased	27%
Decreased	17%
Remained the same	31%
Don't know/ Refused	25%

Base: 249

As detailed above, some 17% of businesses in Brixton discussed their turnover to have decreased over this period.

**Chart 13 – In comparison to 12 months ago, has the total turnover of this business...?**  
Broken down by ethnicity of ownership



Base: 249

As shown above, the 17% overall having seen a decrease in turnover over the last 12 months included 30% of businesses majority owned by those from Black and 31% of those from Asian ethnic backgrounds, with this reported by only 12% of businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic origins. Increases in turnover are more prevalent among businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds.

As shown in the table below, over the last 12 months on average 50% of sales of goods and services was to customers based in Brixton; 17% was to customers elsewhere in Lambeth; 21% was to customers elsewhere in Greater London; 6% was to customers elsewhere in the UK; 2% was to customers based in Europe and 1% was to customers in the rest of the world.

**Figure 25 – Over the last 12 months, what percentage of your sales of goods and services was to customers based in....**

	Range (%)	Average
Brixton	0-100	50%
Elsewhere in Lambeth	0-100	17%
Elsewhere in Greater London	0-100	21%
Elsewhere in the UK (outside of Greater London)	0-100	6%
Europe (excluding the UK)	0-50	2%
Rest of the world	0-60	1%

Base: 249

NB. These figures are based on business estimates. 93% of businesses were able to at least estimate the proportions of their customer base falling within these locations. On average, 7% were unable to provide an estimate.

Over the last 12 months on average only 18% of purchases of goods and services came from suppliers based in Brixton; 8% was from suppliers elsewhere in Lambeth; 28% was from suppliers elsewhere in Greater London; 31% (the highest proportion) was from suppliers elsewhere in the UK; 7% was from suppliers based in Europe and 3% was from suppliers based in the rest of the world.

**Figure 26 – Over the last 12 months, what percentage of your purchases of goods and services came from suppliers based in....**

	Range (%)	Average
Brixton	0-100	18%
Elsewhere in Lambeth	0-100	8%
Elsewhere in Greater London	0-100	28%
Elsewhere in the UK (outside of Greater London)	0-100	31%
Europe (excluding the UK)	0-100	7%
Rest of the world	0-100	3%

Base: 249

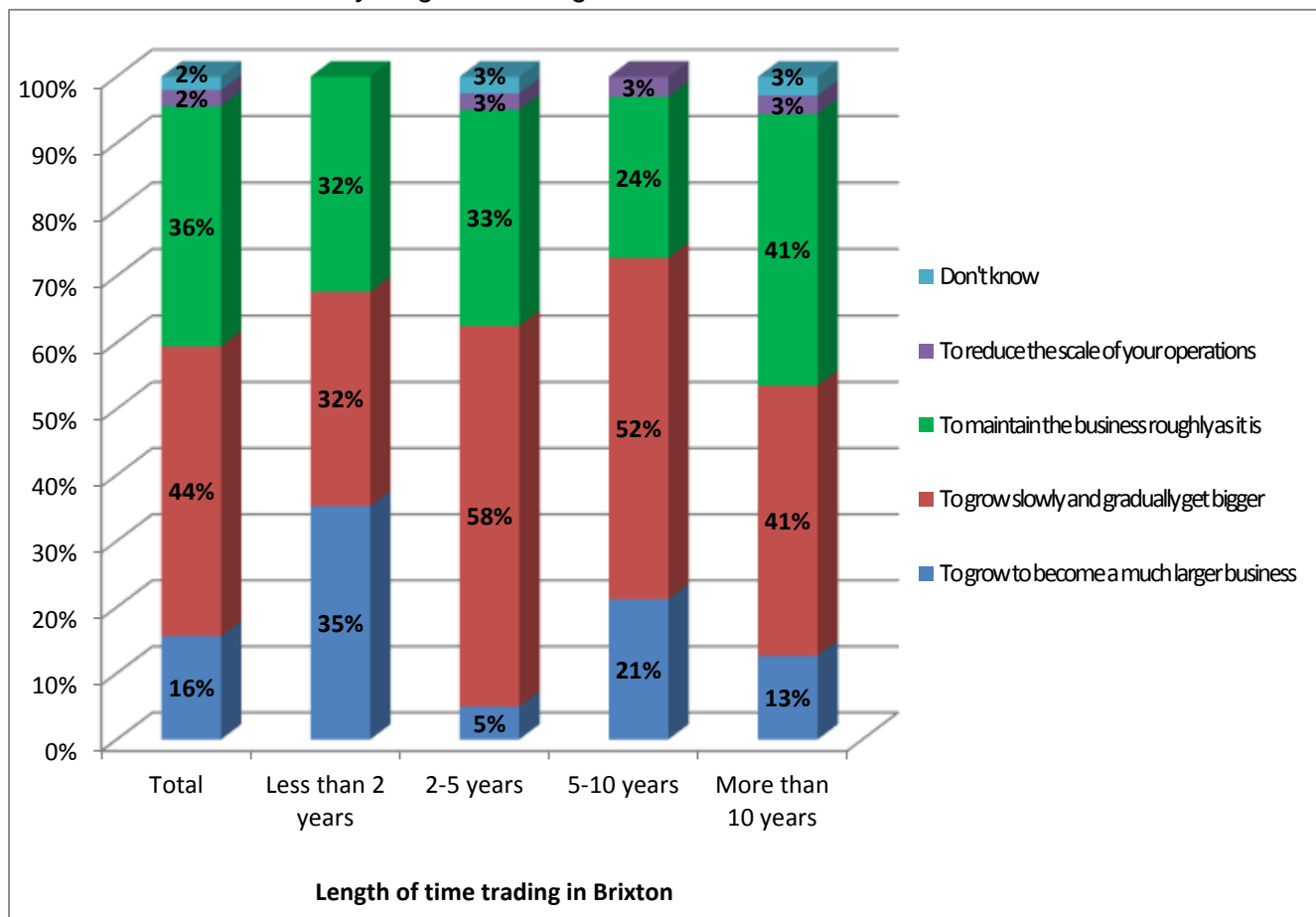
NB. These figures are based on business estimates. 83% of businesses were able to at least estimate the proportions of their goods/services coming from suppliers in these locations. On average, 17% were unable to provide an estimate.

### 3.3.2 Future Objectives

- *44% of businesses in Brixton state their long term objective to be to grow slowly and gradually get bigger.*
- *Increasing sales, profitability and reducing costs are the most frequent objectives for businesses over the next 12 months.*

More than one-third of businesses in Brixton (36%) stated the long term objectives of their business to be to maintain the business roughly as it is. Only 2% in Brixton have ambitions to grow to become much larger businesses in the longer term, with highest proportions stating their long term objectives to be to grow slowly and gradually get bigger (44%). As shown 2% of businesses surveyed plan to reduce the scale of their operations in the long term.

**Chart 14 – Which of the following best describes the long term objectives of your business? Broken down by length of trading in Brixton**



Base: 249

As shown from the above chart, younger businesses who had been trading in Brixton for less than 2 years were more than twice as likely to plan to grow to become a much larger business than businesses in Brixton overall.

Growth expectations also vary by ethnicity of ownership. Whilst 60% of businesses overall suggested they expected to grow (at least slowly), this is the case for 68% of businesses majority owned by those from White and 64% from Black ethnic backgrounds compared with only 48% of businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic origins.

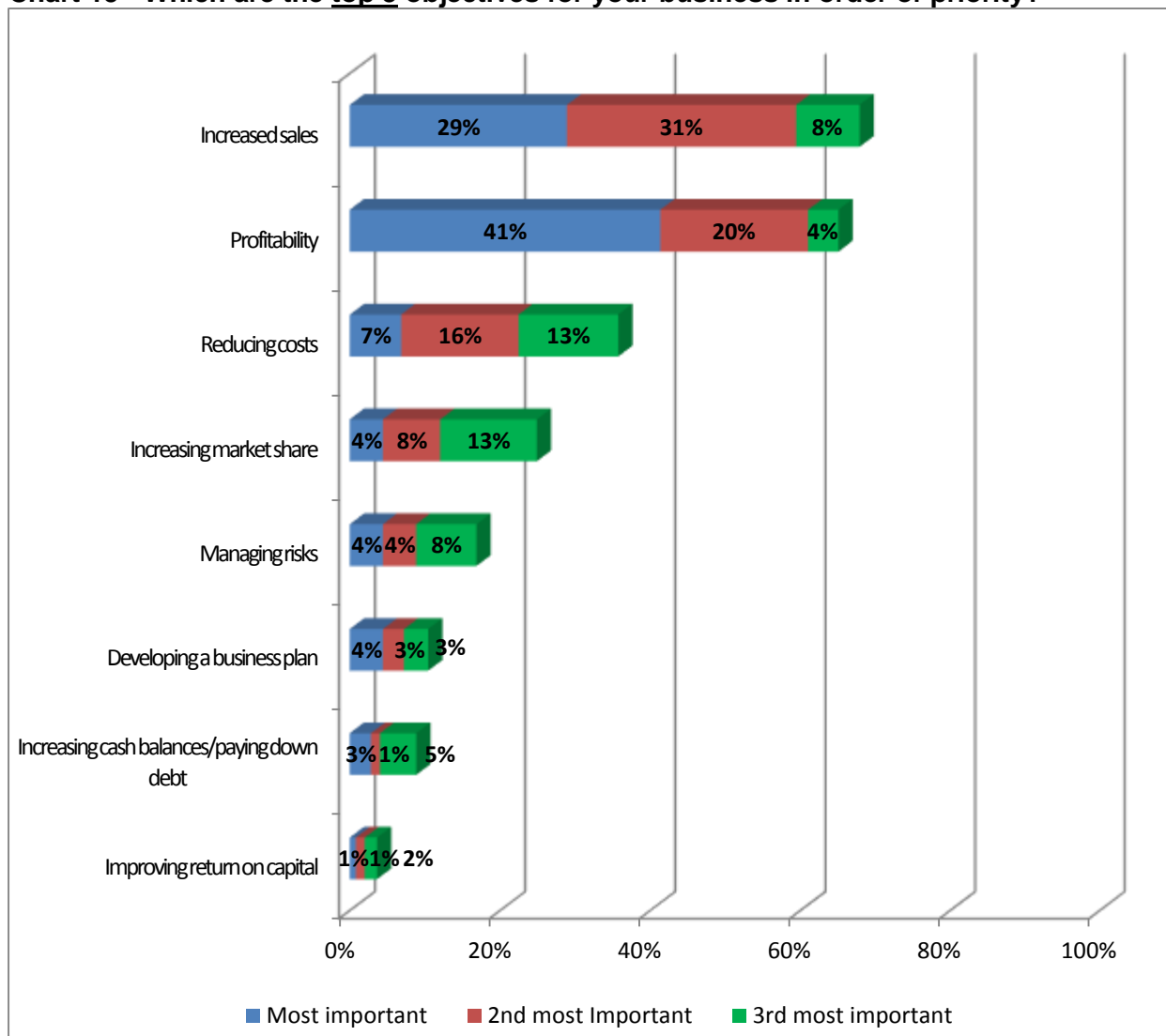
In considering their business objectives for the next 12 months highest proportions of businesses referred to increased sales (78%) and profitability (70%).

**Figure 27 – Which of the following are objectives of your business during the next 12 months?**

	%
Increased sales	78%
Profitability	70%
Reducing costs	56%
Increasing market share	41%
Managing risks	36%
Developing a business plan	28%
Increasing cash balances/paying down debt	27%
Improving return on capital	25%
Don't know	3%
None	3%

Base: 249

**Chart 15 - Which are the top 3 objectives for your business in order of priority?**



Base: 249

As can be seen from the chart, businesses rated increased sales and profitability to be their top 2 priorities whilst reducing costs and increasing market share were the third top priority for a high proportion of businesses.

### 3.3.3 Key Challenges

- *In discussing key challenges for businesses, highest proportions referred to parking, competition in the market place and costs.*

More than three-fifths of businesses (61%) referred to parking as a key challenge. Competition in the market place was also referred to by more than half of businesses (56%).

**Figure 28 – Key challenges for businesses**

	%
Parking	61%
Competition in the market place	56%
Costs	47%
Creating demand	39%
Rising rent/property prices	31%
Crime	29%
Government Regulations	19%
Transport	19%
Access to capital/finance	12%
Late payments from customers	11%
None	2%
Other	4%

Base: 249

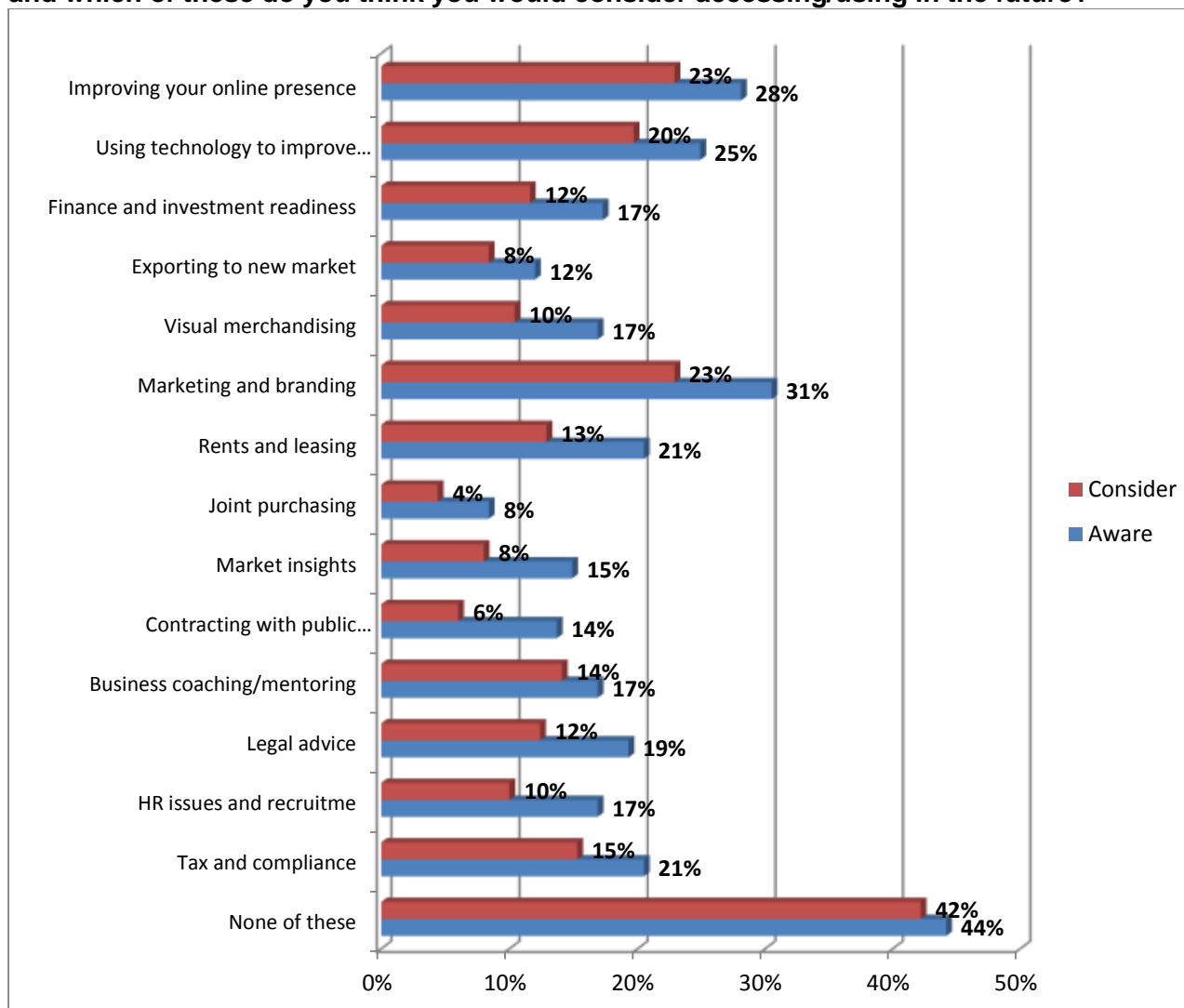
Costs, creating demand, rising rent/property prices and crime were also referred to as challenges faced by a high proportion of businesses in the area.

### 3.3.4 Business Support

- *44% of businesses in Brixton were not aware of any business support services.*
- *Of those that were aware, highest proportions were aware of and would consider utilising marketing and branding business support services and business support services aimed at improving online presence.*

The highest proportion of businesses (31%) were aware of marketing and branding business support services, followed by 28% who were aware of business support services aimed at improving online presence. These two types of services were also the top two that businesses would consider using.

**Chart 16 - Which of the following types of business support services are you aware of and which of these do you think you would consider accessing/using in the future?**



Base: 249

### 3.4 The Brixton BID

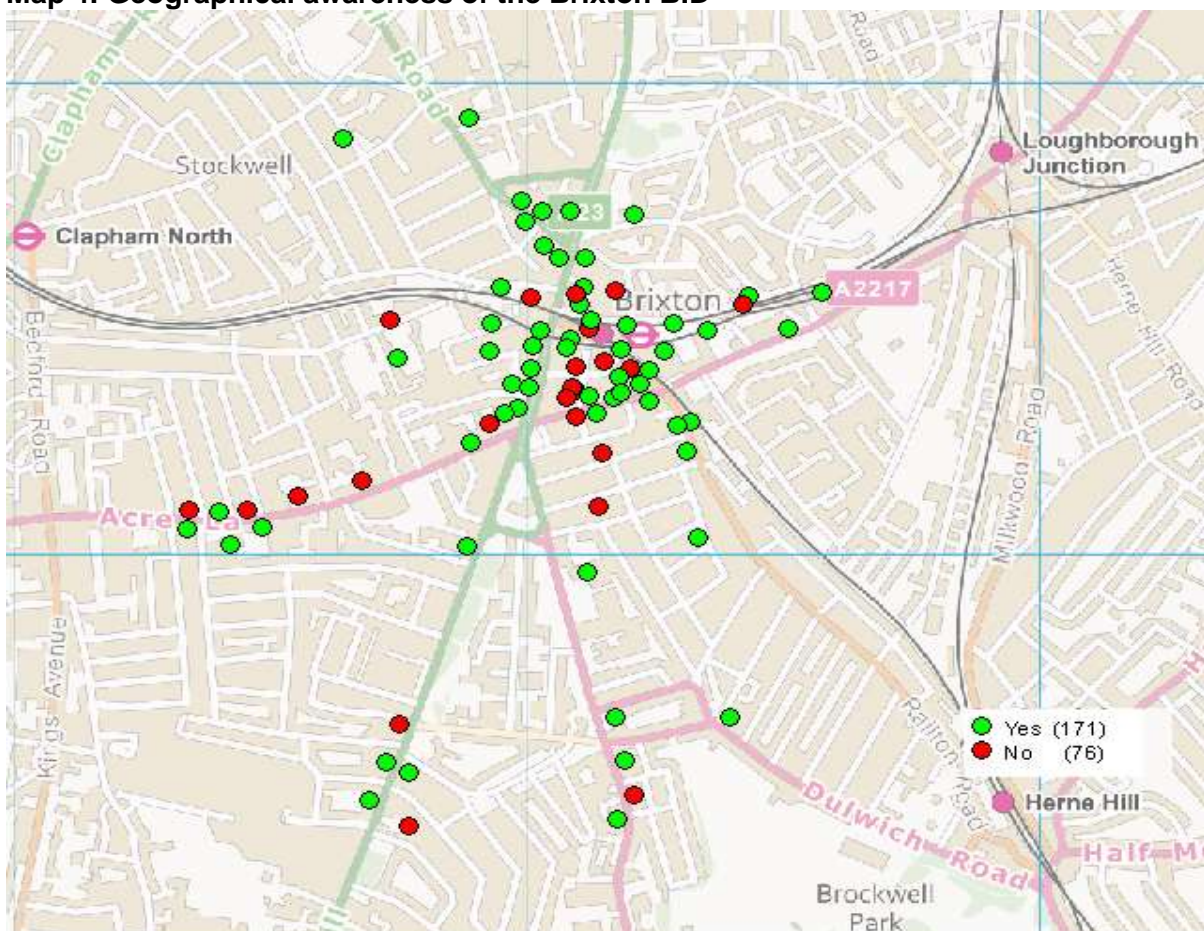
Businesses were asked about their awareness of the Brixton BID and the types of initiatives that they would like to see the BID implementing.

- 69% of businesses surveyed were aware of the Brixton Bid.
- Awareness of the Brixton BID is highest among businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds.
- The highest proportion of businesses were aware of the reduced rates on recycling offered by First Mile Ltd (39%).
- Only 12% of businesses attended or were part of a Business Network.

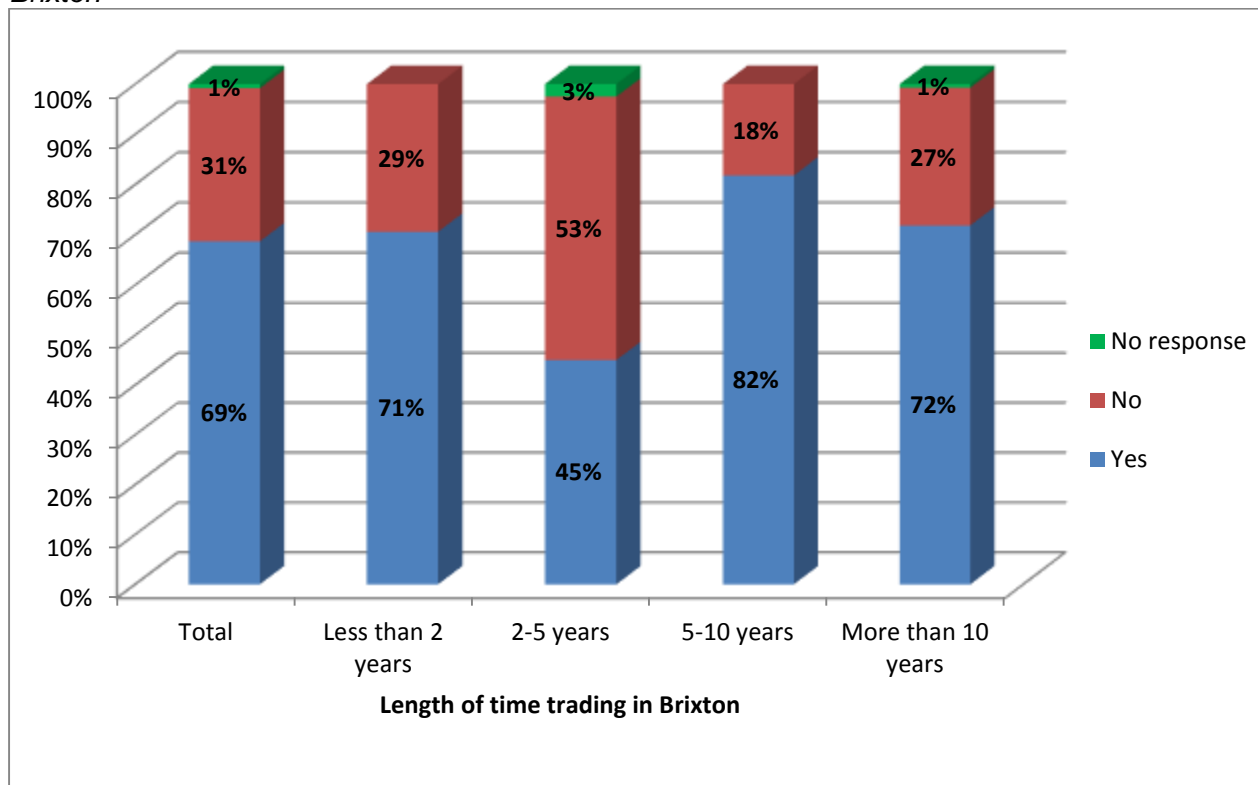
69% of businesses were aware of the Brixton Bid. Those businesses that were not aware of the Brixton BID were signposted to visit the Brixton BID website, [www.brixtonbid.co.uk](http://www.brixtonbid.co.uk), in order to raise awareness.

Map 4 below depicts geographical awareness of the Brixton BID.

**Map 4: Geographical awareness of the Brixton BID**



**Chart 17 - Are you aware of the Brixton BID? Broken down by length of time trading in Brixton**



Base: 249

Interestingly, newer business that had been trading in Brixton for less than 2 years and older businesses that had been trading in Brixton for more than 5 years were much more likely to be aware of the Brixton bid than those that had been trading for between 2 and 5 years.

**Figure 29 - Are you aware of the Brixton BID? Broken down by ethnicity of ownership**

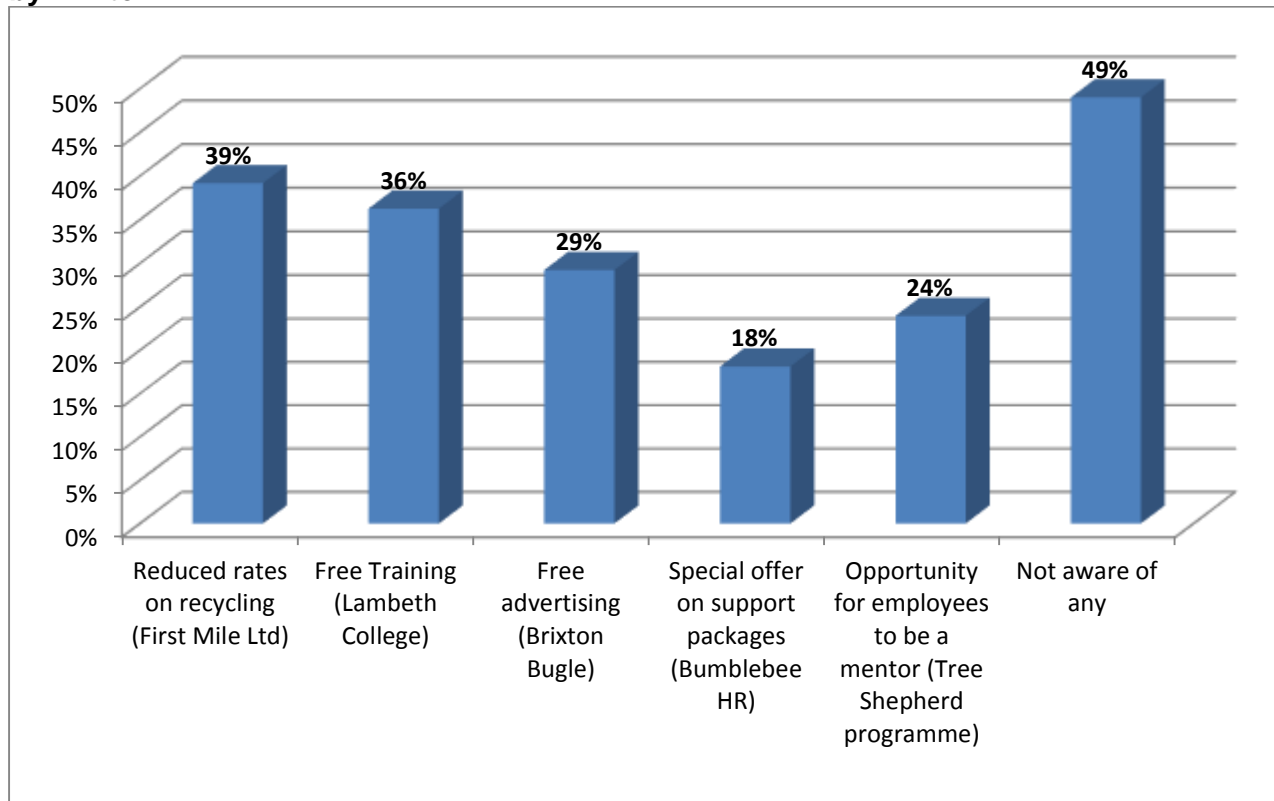
	Total 249 %	White 68 %	Black 33 %	Asian 29 %	Other/Mixed 47 %
Yes	69%	82%	73%	79%	64%
No	31%	16%	27%	21%	34%
No response	1%	2%	-	-	2%

Base: 249

As shown, awareness of the Brixton BID is also highest among businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds.

Those businesses that were aware of the Brixton BID were asked which of the business support programmes offered by the Brixton BID they were aware of.

**Chart 18 - Are you aware of any of the following business support programmes offered by Brixton BID?**

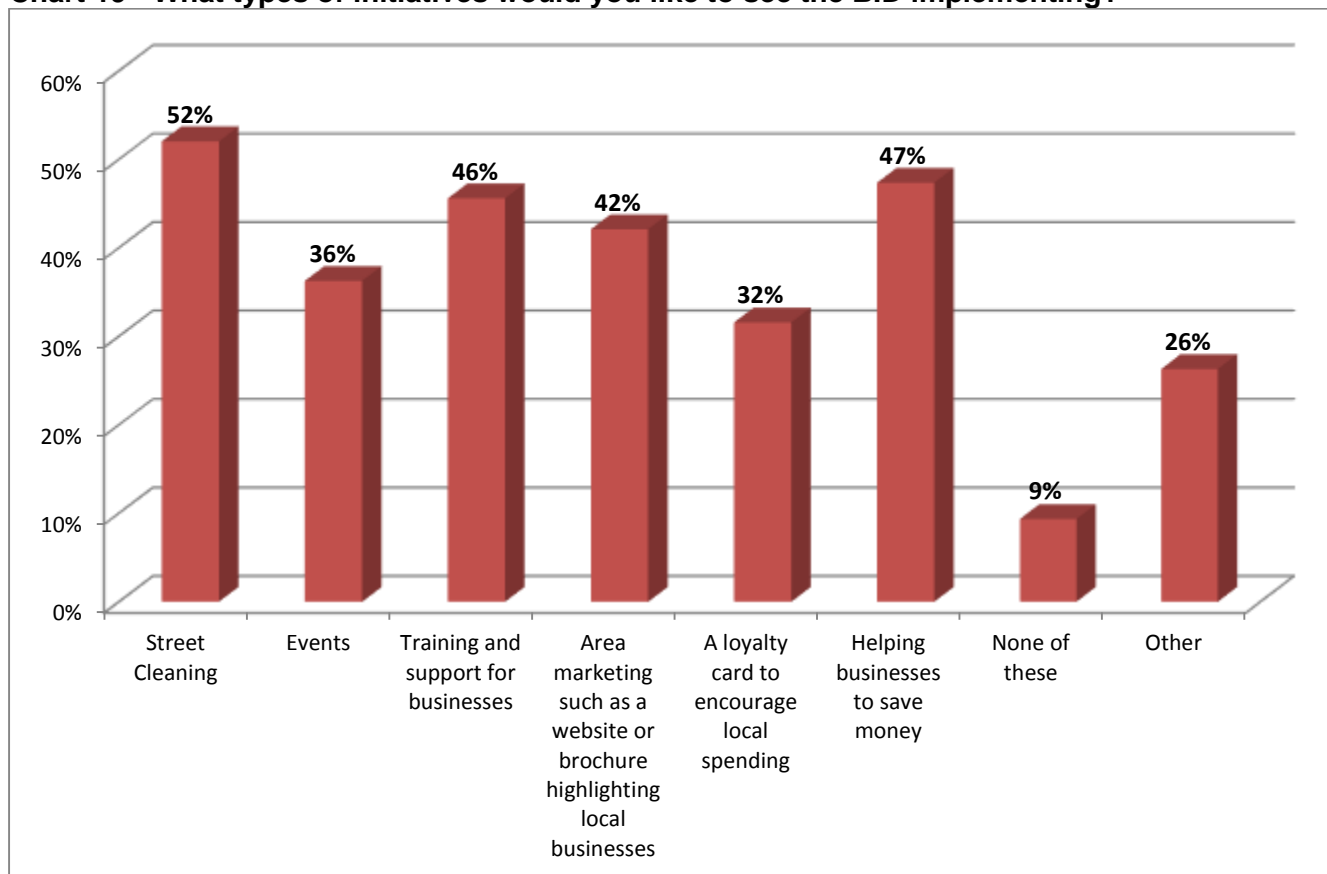


*Base: Respondents who were aware of the Brixton BID - 171*

As shown in the chart above, highest proportions of businesses were aware of the reduced rates on recycling offered by First Mile Ltd (39%). Over one-third (36%) were aware of the free training offered at Lambeth college whilst 29% were aware of the free advertising offered by the Brixton Bugle. However, almost half of businesses who were aware of the BID (49%) were not aware of any of the business support programmes that it offers.

Businesses aware of the Brixton BID were also asked which types of initiatives they would like to see the BID implementing. The majority of businesses in Brixton (52%) would like to see the BID implementing street cleaning; this was closely followed by 47% of business who want the BID to help businesses save money and 46% who wanted the BID to implement training and support for businesses.

**Chart 19 - What types of initiatives would you like to see the BID implementing?**



Base: Respondents who were aware of the Brixton BID - 171

Those who would like the Brixton BID to implement training and support for businesses most commonly wanted the BID to offer training around health & Safety, food hygiene and first aid (24%).

**Figure 30 - What types of training would you like to see offered/ attend?**

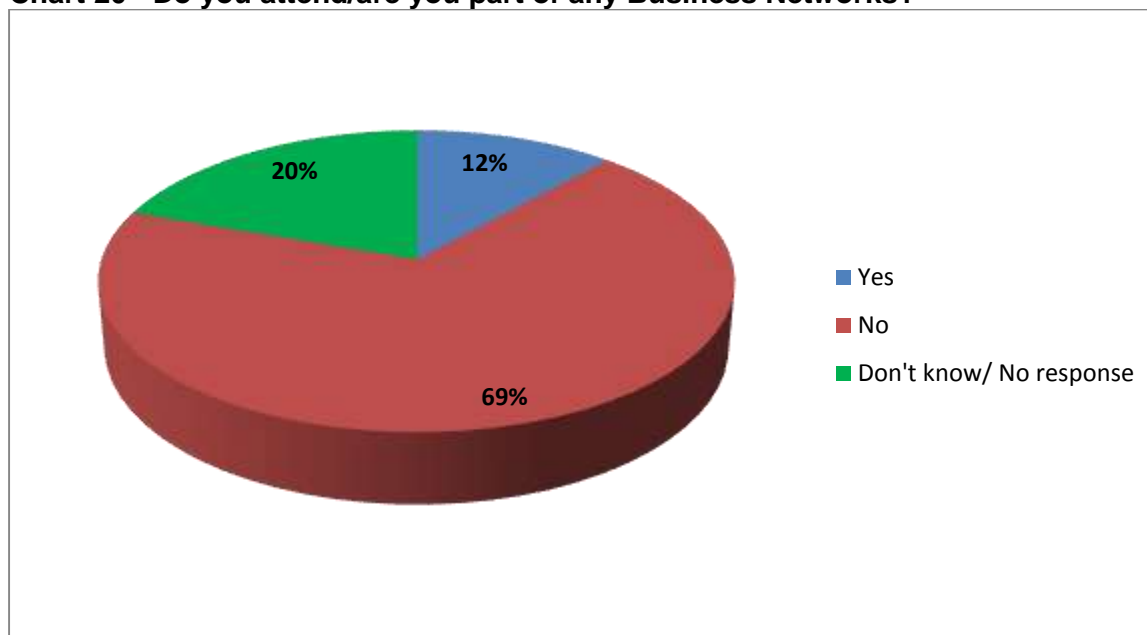
	%
Health & safety, food hygiene, first aid	24%
General business training	21%
Customer service	15%
IT, digital marketing, social media	10%
Job specific training	10%
Not sure	3%

Base: Respondents who would like to see training and support offered - 78

Businesses aware of the Brixton BID were also asked if they were aware of the theme group meetings or the night time economy forum that are currently offered by the Brixton BID. Equal proportions of 23% were aware of each of the theme group meetings and the night time economy forum.

Only 12% of businesses attended or were part of a Business Network.

**Chart 20 - Do you attend/are you part of any Business Networks?**



Base: 249

This is the case for 18% of businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds, 15% of other/mixed race businesses, 12% of Black businesses and only 3% of businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic origins.

Those who did attend or were part of a business network were asked which networks they were part of.

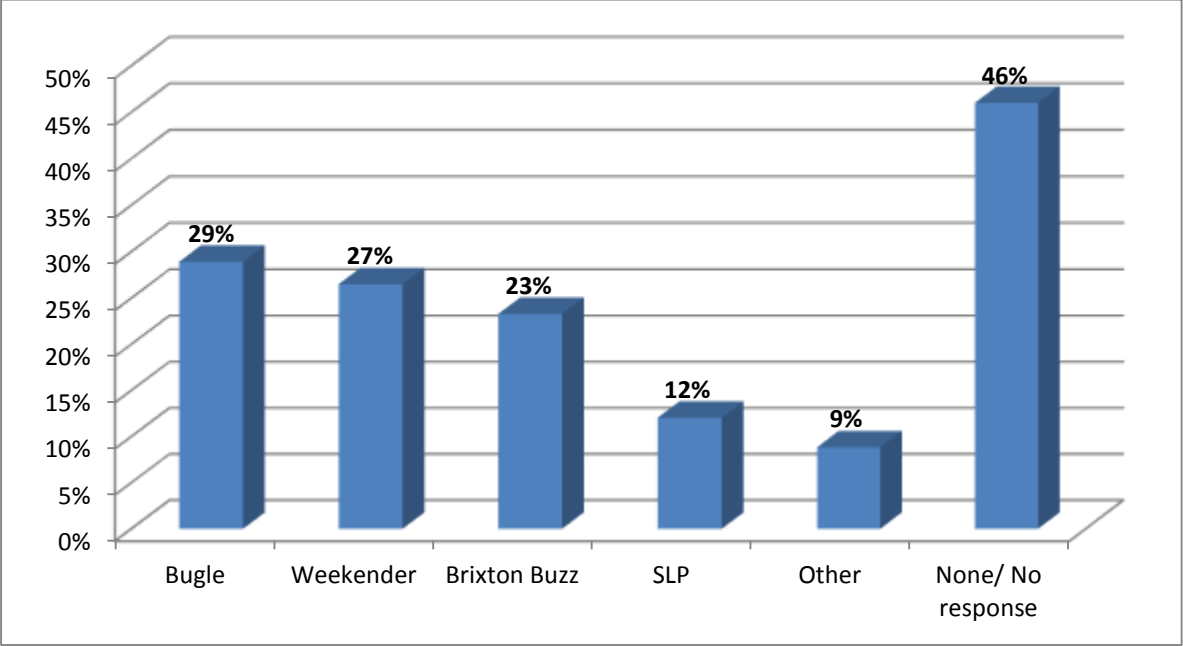
**Figure 31 - Which Business Networks do you attend/are you part of?**

	%
Brixton BID	17%
BNI	7%
Night time economy forum	7%
Brixton pound	4%

Base: 29

The highest proportion of businesses regularly read the Bugle for local information (29%); 27% regularly read the Weekender whilst 23% regularly read the Brixton Buzz.

**Chart 21 - Which of the following local press or blogs do you regularly read for local information?**



Base: 249

‘Other’ local press or blogs referred to include the Brixton Blog, Lambeth Talk, Lambeth Life and Urban 75.

### 3.5 Impacts of Town Centre developments on business performance

Businesses were asked a series of questions regarding the effect that the developments are having on their business.

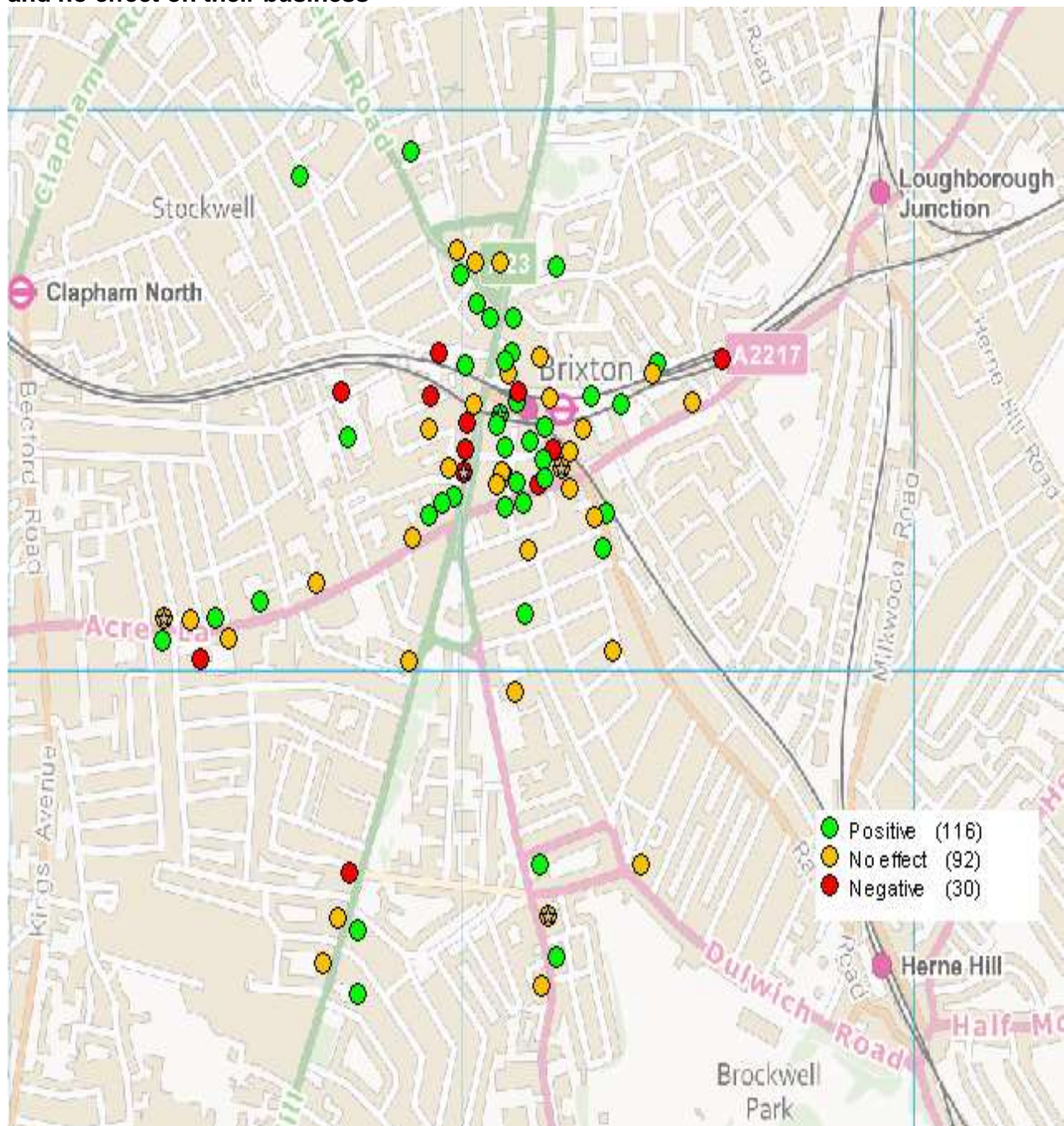
- *The changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on approximately half of businesses. Only 12% of businesses claimed that the changes were having a negative effect on their business.*
- *Businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds more frequently referred to changes in Brixton having a positive effect on their business, with those majority owned by those from Asian backgrounds more frequently reporting negative impacts.*
- *Where businesses had said that the changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on their business, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that the changes have encouraged more affluent customers and visitors to visit Brixton now.*
- *Two-thirds of businesses anticipate that a regeneration of Brixton Town Centre will have a positive effect on Brixton business performance in the future.*

#### 3.5.1 Current Impacts

Approximately half of businesses (47%) claimed that the changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on their businesses. Only 12% of businesses claimed that the changes were having a negative effect on their business. The changes have had no effect on 37% of businesses.

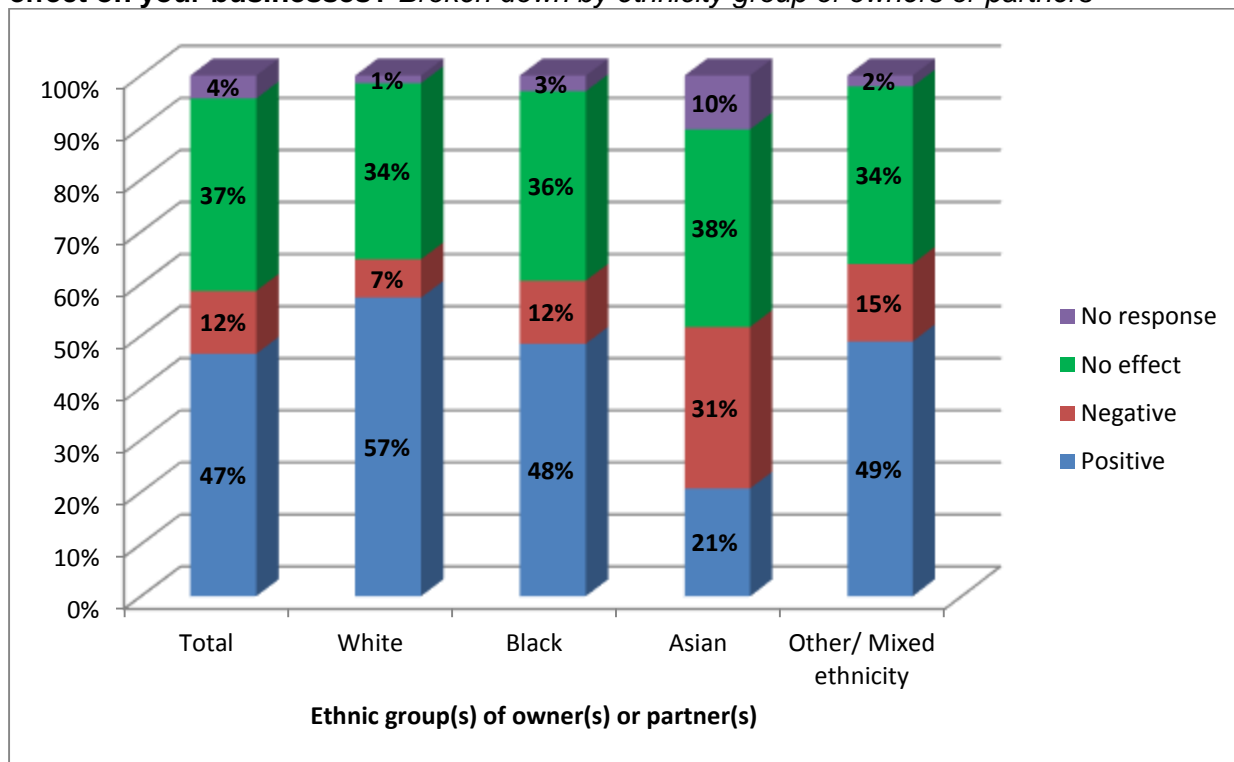
Map 5 overleaf depicts the location of businesses referring to changes in Brixton having positive, negative and no effect on their business.

**Map 5: Location of businesses referring to changes in Brixton having positive, negative and no effect on their business**



As can be seen from the chart overleaf, businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds significantly more frequently referred to changes in Brixton having a positive effect on their business, with those majority owned by those from Asian backgrounds significantly more frequently reporting negative impacts.

**Chart 22 – Do you think that the changes in Brixton are having a positive or negative effect on your businesses? Broken down by ethnicity group of owners or partners**



Base: 249

Where businesses had said that the changes in Brixton are having a positive effect on their business, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that the changes have encouraged more affluent customers and visitors to visit Brixton now. The area being nicer and safer was also cited as a reason.

**Figure 32 – Reasons for rating the changes as having a positive effect on businesses**

	%
More affluent customers and visitors to the area now.	52%
Regeneration has been positive for the business	16%
The area is a much nicer place	12%
It's a much safer environment than before	10%
New businesses are opening up in the area	5%
Better transport makes it easier to visit	2%
Other	9%

Base: Respondents who rated the changes as having a positive effect – 116

Where businesses had said that the changes in Brixton are having a negative effect on their business, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that the lack of parking is a major issue for businesses. Other reasons included rising costs negatively affecting the business, more competition and no changes being seen for the businesses.

**Figure 33 – Reasons for rating the changes as having a negative effect on businesses**

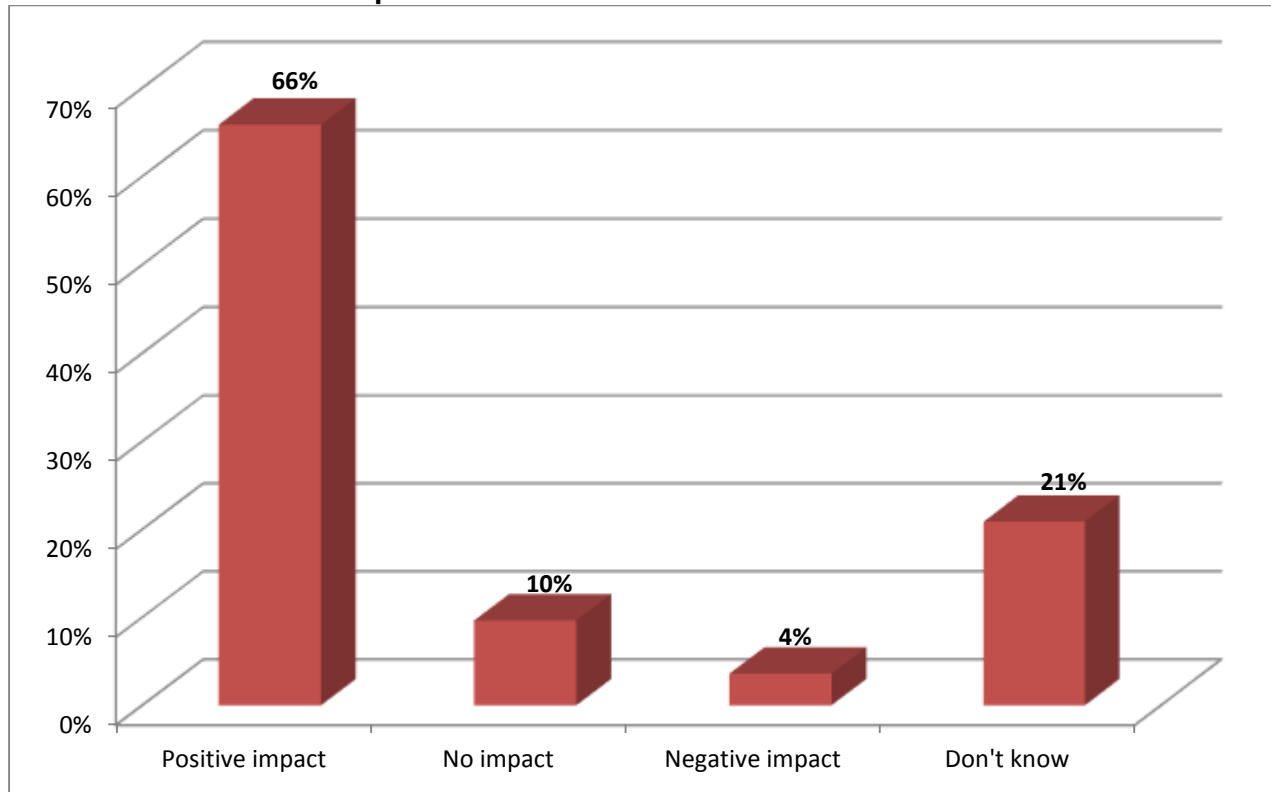
	%
Lack of parking is a major issue	23%
Rising costs have affected the business	17%
The business hasn't seen any changes	7%
Much more competition in Brixton than before	7%
New businesses are opening up in the area	3%

*Base: Respondents who rated the changes as having a negative effect – 30*

### 3.5.2 Future Impacts

Two-thirds of businesses anticipate that a regeneration of Brixton Town Centre will have a positive effect on Brixton business performance in the future. Only 4% anticipate it having a negative effect.

**Chart 23 - What impact do you anticipate that a regeneration of Brixton Town Centre will have on Brixton business performance in the future?**



Base: 249

Where businesses anticipated a positive effect on Brixton business performance, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that the changes will encourage more people and visitors to Brixton.

**Figure 34 – Reasons for rating the changes as having a positive effect on businesses**

	%
Will encourage more people and businesses into the area	57%
Any improvements should benefit the area and businesses	33%
Depends on costs	3%

Base: Respondents who anticipated the changes to have a positive effect – 164

Where businesses anticipated a negative effect on Brixton business performance, in the majority of cases the reason for this was that businesses feel that local businesses will be forced out and/or will struggle.

**Figure 35 – Reasons for rating the changes as having a negative effect on businesses**

	%
Local businesses are struggling to survive or being forced out	56%

*Base: Respondents who anticipated the changes to have a negative effect – 9*

The table below shows the level of impacts improvements to Brixton Town Centre are expected to have on a number of aspects. For each statement, participants were asked on scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is no impact at all and 5 is a major impact, how much of an impact they felt improvements to Brixton Town Centre would have. (The closer to 5, the more impact they expect the improvements to have).

**Figure 36 – On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is no impact at all and 5 is a major impact, how much of an impact do you feel improvements to Brixton Town Centre will have on...**

	Mean score
Attracting investment to the area	4.06
Increasing land and property values	4.13
Attracting people/customers to the area	4.16
Enhancing the image of the area	4.20
Enhancing the feel/community spirit of the area	3.84
Increasing ease of recruitment	3.44

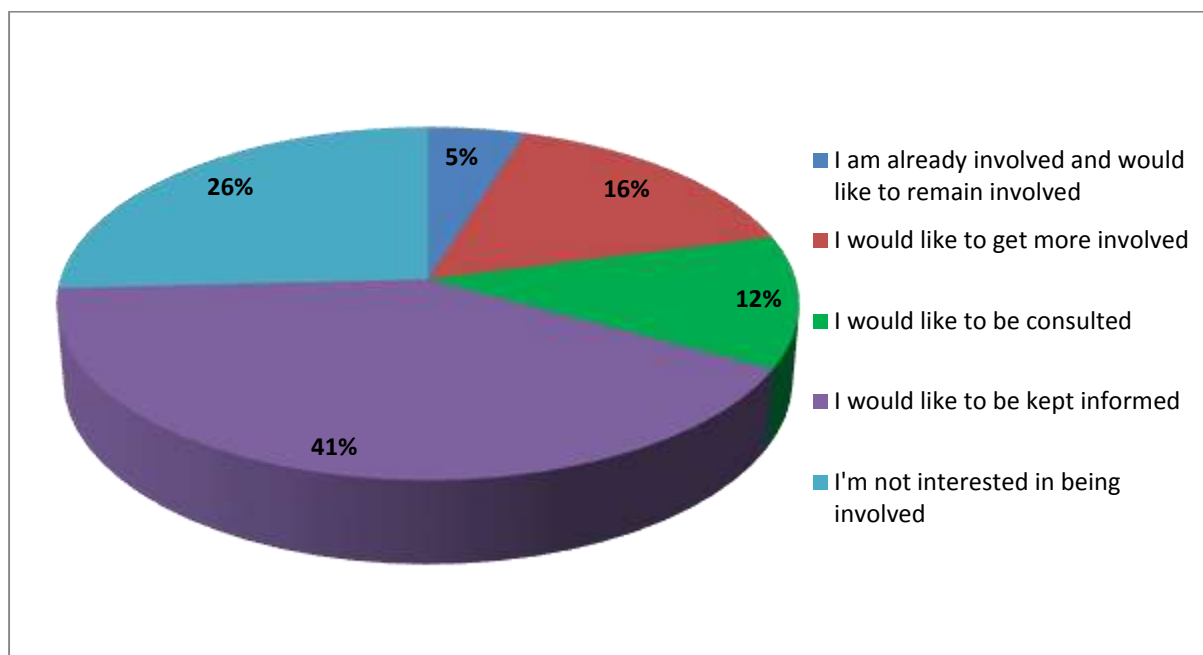
*Base: 249*

As shown, on average businesses thought that the improvements to Brixton town centre would have the largest impact on enhancing the image of the area (with a mean score on the scale of 4.20). Attracting people/customers to the area, increasing land and property values and attracting investment to the area also record mean scores above 4 on the 1 to 5 scale. It was envisaged that there would be some impact on enhancing the feel/community spirit of the area and increasing ease of recruitment.

### 3.6 Future Involvement in shaping the future development of Brixton

Businesses that complete the survey were asked if they were interested in being involved in shaping the future development of Brixton. 5% of businesses stated that they were already involved and would like to remain involved; 16% would like to get more involved; 12% would like to be consulted; 41% would like to be kept informed; and 26% were not interested in being involved.

**Chart 24 - Can you tell me which of the following levels of involvement you would be interested in?**



Base: 249

Businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic origins most frequently suggested they would like to get more involved (24% compared with 16% overall).

**Figure 37 - Which of the following levels of involvement would you be interested in?**

*Broken down by ethnicity of ownership*

	Total 249 %	White 68 %	Black 33 %	Asian 29 %	Other/Mixed 47 %
I am already involved and would like to remain involved	5%	7%	6%	7%	-
I would like to get more involved	16%	13%	24%	14%	17%
I would like to be consulted	12%	21%	18%	-	6%
I would like to be kept informed	41%	35%	46%	48%	49%
I'm not interested in being involved	26%	22%	6%	31%	28%

Base: 249

## 4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

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In the main, businesses are well established in the Brixton area with more than half of businesses surveyed having been trading there for more than 10 years. New businesses are still being established though with 5% of participating businesses having started up or moved into the area within the last 12 months.

A good level of positivity is reported among businesses with two-thirds rating Brixton as a good or very good place to run a business and 61% suggesting the area to have improved over the last 3 years. In contrast, a much lower proportion of 15% suggested the area to have got worse over this period with only 11% rating the area as poor or very poor as a place to run a business. Businesses majority owned by those from Black and Asian ethnic backgrounds more frequently referred to the area having got worse over the last 3 years.

The main challenges referred to by businesses include parking, crime, anti-social behaviour and security, increased costs and competition. Despite these challenges the majority (86%) expect to be trading in Brixton in 3 years time with only 6% expecting this not to be the case.

Almost half of businesses participating in the survey (46%) suggest changes in Brixton to be having a positive effect on their business with a further 37% reporting having seen no impact to date. However, 12% suggested changes to be having negative impact on their business with this perhaps an issue to consider further. Again, negative impacts are more frequently referred to by businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds, with 31% of this group suggesting the changes to have had a negative impact on their business.

Some 27% of businesses had seen an increase in turnover over the last 12 months with 17% reporting a decrease over this period. Again, significant differences are apparent here with regard to the ethnicity of business ownership. Some 30% of Black and 31% of Asian owned businesses reported a decrease in their turnover (in comparison to the 17% overall). Encouragingly, only 2% of businesses overall plan to reduce the scale of their operations in the future, with 60% describing the long term objectives of their businesses to involve growth. Inline with the findings above, these growth expectations were also lower among Asian owned businesses with only 48% of this group expecting to see growth in the future.

Just over two thirds of businesses (69%) claim to be aware of the Brixton BID, with this highest among businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds (80%). The initiatives businesses would most frequently like to see implemented by the BID include street cleaning, helping businesses to save money and training and support for businesses. Only 12% of businesses participating currently attend or are part of business networks, with this ranging from 18% of businesses owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds down to only 3% of businesses owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds.

Employment in the area has seen an increase with 24% claiming the number of employees to have increased over the last 12 months compared with only 8% reporting a decrease. Businesses majority owned by those from White ethnic backgrounds are again most positive here with higher proportions of these businesses claiming the number of employees to have

increased. On the other hand, among Black businesses, a significantly higher proportion referred to employee numbers having decreased (27% compared with 8% overall). It is also notable that for the majority of Asian businesses employment levels had remained stable.

Despite businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds having seen employee numbers decrease most frequently over the last 12 months, it is this group who are most positive in terms of plans to recruit additional staff in the next 12 months (39% of this group plan to recruit staff in the next 12 months with this the case for 35% of businesses overall). The most commonly used recruitment method among businesses in the area is word of mouth, followed by the internet, with 63% of employers claiming to make particular effort to recruit staff locally.

Encouragingly 59% of businesses suggest they would use a local recruitment service as long as it was responsive to their human resources requirements and supplied them with high quality candidates. Interest in this was highest among businesses majority owned by those from Black ethnic backgrounds (79%).

On a positive note, two-thirds of businesses anticipate that the regeneration of Brixton Town Centre will have a positive impact on Brixton business performance in the future.

Despite almost one in three businesses (31%) claiming not to be aware of the Brixton BID, interest in being involved in shaping the future development of Brixton is fairly high. Sixteen percent would like to get more involved, 12% would like to be consulted and the highest proportions (41%) are keen to be kept informed. Despite this, there remains 1 in 4 businesses who claim not to be interested in getting involved, with this including 31% of businesses majority owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds.

It is positive that such high proportions of businesses are interested in shaping the future development of Brixton. With 16% being keen to get more involved, 12% wishing to be consulted and 41% wanting to be kept informed, it is important that this interest is captured. Encouraging more involvement and offering more opportunities for businesses to be involved with the BID and other business networks following on from the survey is important. This could be done by follow up to the survey. We would recommend circulation of headline results perhaps with opportunities to comment, feedback to the BID etc. Maintaining this apparent level of interest in the area is critical to successful continued engagement of businesses in the future.

It is also important to look at the one in four businesses not interested in being involved. Understanding why this is the case (potentially through further consultation) is critical in order to consider ways to address this/engage them further in the future.

As findings show, 12% of businesses consider changes in Brixton to have had a negative impact on their business. It would be worth considering further the reasons for businesses suggesting changes to have had a negative impact, along with looking further at the type of businesses these are and considering whether anything can be done to help/support them.

As discussed in the conclusions above, businesses from Black and Asian ethnic backgrounds more frequently refer to the area having got worse over the last 3 years, with those majority

owned by those from Asian ethnic backgrounds also most frequently reporting changes to have had negative impacts on their business. Asian owned businesses also reported lower growth expectations. It is therefore critical to engage further with those businesses to better understand the issues they are facing and see if anything can be done to help them further in the future.

Raising the profile of the BID is a further option. The figure of 69% currently being aware could be increased by further publicity – perhaps case studies of business success stories taken from those businesses who have seen positive impacts on their business. These could be developed through follow-ups to the survey.

# Appendix 1 – Business Methodology

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A total of 249 interviews were completed with businesses, 217 by telephone and 32 face-to-face.

Due to the relatively small population size for the survey (670 business records), all businesses in the target area were invited to take part in the survey.

Fieldwork took place between 20<sup>th</sup> October and 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

Initial contact was made with all business by telephone. A minimum of 10 calls were made to all businesses (unless an interview was achieved or refusal given) to ensure businesses had as much opportunity as possible to take part in the survey.

Where telephone numbers were not available or inaccurate, face-to-face visits were made to attempt to complete the survey.

Face-to-face visits were also made to businesses requesting this methodology when initially contacted by telephone (this was most frequently the case for retail/food businesses that rely on their telephone line for business purposes and thus could not afford to spend 20-30 minutes on the line).

Interviews were completed during the day and in the evenings (upon request) and lasted between 12 minutes and 1 hour with the average interview lasting around 30 minutes.

Interviews were completed with the business owner/manager to ensure accurate data was achieved.