

# STATE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

## IN THE EAST MIDLANDS



This paper sets out headline findings on the state of social enterprise in the East Midlands, using government estimates and data from the State of Social Enterprise 2025 and SEUK's Social Enterprise Knowledge Centre.

<p><b>Around 5,500 of the 100,000 social enterprises</b> in the UK operate in the East Midlands*. <b>63%</b> of these operate as Community Interest Companies.</p>	<p><b>Median social enterprise turnover</b> in the East Midlands was around <b>£117,500</b> in the previous financial year.</p>	<p>Social enterprises in the East Midlands employ a <b>median of 6 people</b> on average.</p>
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Of the social enterprises surveyed:

**37%** deliver products  
**88%** deliver services  
**19%** deliver works

The main sources of income for social enterprises in the East Midlands were trading with the **public sector (28%)**, trading with the **general public (23%)**, and trading with the **private sector (14%)**.

The median amount of time social enterprises in the East Midlands have been trading is 8 years.

	EM	UK
<b>Up to 6 months</b>	2%	3%
<b>7 months to a year</b>	5%	2%
<b>1-3 years</b>	19%	19%
<b>4-5 years</b>	16%	17%
<b>6-10 years</b>	21%	26%
<b>11-15 years</b>	16%	14%
<b>16-20 years</b>	9%	7%
<b>More than 20 years</b>	12%	11%

## ECONOMY

**47%** of social enterprises in the East Midlands made a profit in the last year, up slightly from **45%** in **2023** and above the UK figure of **40%**.

**50%** of social enterprises in the East Midlands developed a **new product/service in the last 12 months**.

	PROFIT		LOSS		BROKE EVEN	
	EM	UK	EM	UK	EM	UK
<b>2025</b>	47%	40%	21%	26%	30%	28%
<b>2023</b>	45%	48%	32%	26%	19%	22%
<b>2021</b>	46%	49%	22%	25%	32%	25%

	EAST MIDLANDS	UK
<b>2025</b>	50%	50%
<b>2023</b>	50%	53%
<b>2021</b>	52%	61%

**53%** grew their turnover in the previous financial year.

**16%** decreased their turnover versus the previous financial year.

**72%** expect their turnover to grow in the next financial year, and **12%** expect it to decrease.

Of those who expect their turnover to grow, most plan to achieve this through partnerships with the public/private sector (**71%**), developing a new product/service (**71%**), and diversifying/expanding into new markets (**55%**).

**Financial barriers** were perceived as the biggest barrier to growth (**67%**). Of these financial barriers, **cash flow was viewed** as the biggest barrier to growth (**71%**).



## SOCIETY

**42%** of leaders in the East Midlands are women. This is lower than the UK figure of **57%**.

**12%** come from a minority ethnic background. This is lower than the UK figure of **17%**.

**30%** are disabled or neurodivergent. This is the same as the UK figure.

**65%** have lived experience of the social issue(s) addressed by their social enterprise.

**93%** are real living wage employers.



NHS staff learn cycle confidence skills as part of the Brightwayz Bike Life programme in North Northamptonshire.

The **top three impact** areas for social enterprises in the East Midlands are:

- Supporting vulnerable people **(35%)**
- Mental health and wellbeing **(49%)**
- Supporting other social enterprises/organisations **(30%)**

## SUPPORT

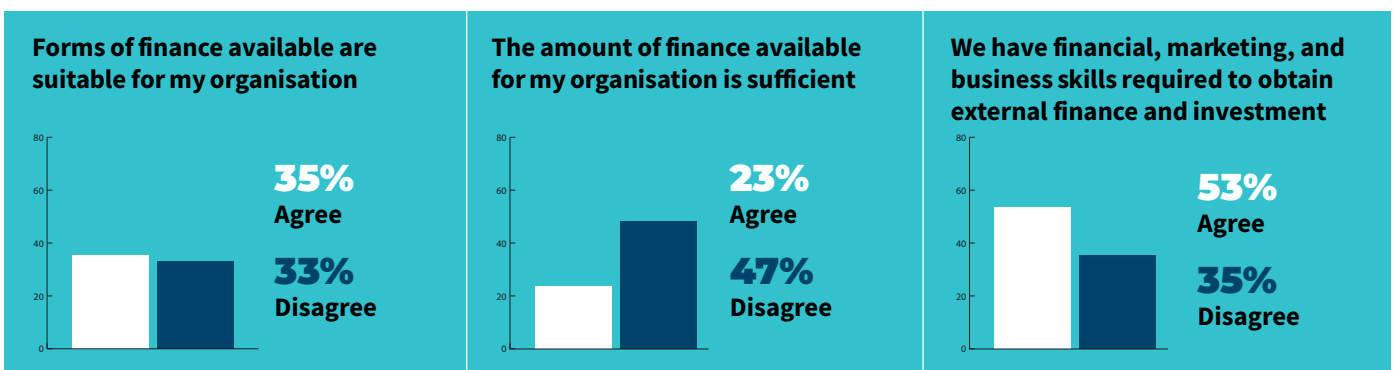
Summary of interest in external finance (not including grants) in the last 12 months.

The four most common reasons for deciding not to apply to new sources of finance in 2025 were:

	2025	2023	2021
<b>Applied for external finance</b>	12%	3%	34%
<b>Considered applying but didn't</b>	23%	39%	22%
<b>Not considered applying</b>	60%	55%	44%
<b>Don't know/prefer not to say</b>	5%	3%	N/A

	2025	2023	2021
<b>No finance required</b>	30%	17%	29%
<b>Thought finance would be too expensive</b>	20%	17%	14%
<b>Didn't want to take on additional risk</b>	20%	8%	21%
<b>Time pressures/lack of resources prevented application</b>	20%	33%	7%

Opinions on external finance were as follows:



The three most common areas where external information/advice were sought were:

