

STATE OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

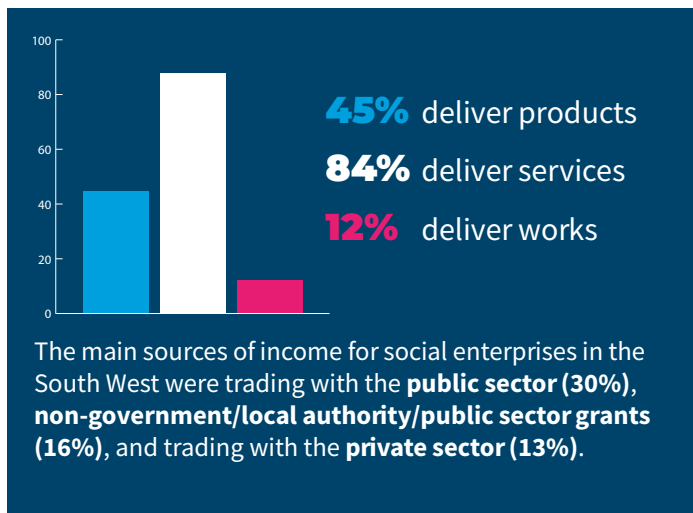


IN SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

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

Around 11,500 of the 100,000 social enterprises in the UK operate in South West England*. 57% of these operate as CICs.	Median social enterprise turnover in South West England was around £67,500 in the previous financial year.	Social enterprises in South West England employ a median of 6 people .
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Of the social enterprises surveyed:



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

	SW	UK
Up to 6 months	1%	3%
7 months to a year	2%	2%
1-3 years	17%	19%
4-5 years	24%	17%
6-10 years	29%	26%
11-15 years	13%	14%
16-20 years	7%	7%
More than 20 years	6%	11%

ECONOMY

The portion of social enterprises in the SW making a profit is consistently slightly lower than the UK figure, however the portion of SEs making a profit has decreased across the board, both in the South West region and across the UK.

The portion of social enterprises in the South West that have developed new products or services is **45%**, consistent with **2023**, but considerably down from **61%** in **2021**.

	PROFIT		LOSS		BROKE EVEN	
	SW	UK	SW	UK	SW	UK
2025	39%	40%	23%	26%	31%	28%
2023	41%	48%	28%	26%	25%	22%
2021	46%	49%	31%	25%	23%	25%

	SW	UK
2025	45%	50%
2023	45%	53%
2021	61%	61%

47% reduced costs/increased efficiency. **45%** developed new products/services. **43%** expanded into new geographic or different customer markets.

41% grew their turnover from the previous financial year.

31% decreased their turnover from the previous financial year.

55% expect to grow their turnover in the next financial year, and **14%** expect it to decrease.

Financial barriers were perceived as the biggest barrier to growth (**66%**). Of these financial barriers, **obtaining grant funding** was seen as the biggest barrier to growth (**56%**).

Of those who expect their turnover to grow, most plan to achieve this through developing new products/services (**70%**), diversifying/expanding into new markets (**55%**), and partnerships with the public/private sector (**46%**).



SOCIETY

54% of social enterprise leaders in the South West are women. This is lower than the UK figure of **57%**.

8% come from a minority ethnic background. This is lower than the UK figure of **17%**.

31% are disabled or neurodiverse. This is slightly higher than the UK figure of **30%**.

75% have experience of the social issue(s) addressed by their social enterprise

78% are real living wage employers



Raised in Bristol is a small chain of nurseries dedicated to early years education.

The **top three impact** areas for social enterprises in the South West are:

- Supporting vulnerable people **(50%)**
- Mental health and wellbeing **(45%)**
- Benefitting a particular locality/community building **(34%)**

SUPPORT

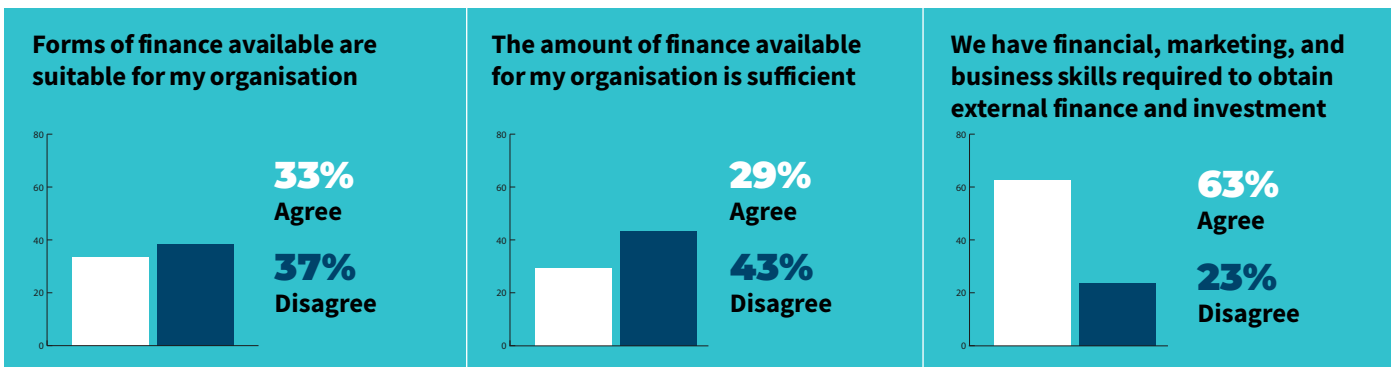
Summary of interest in external finance (not including grants) in the last 12 months.

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

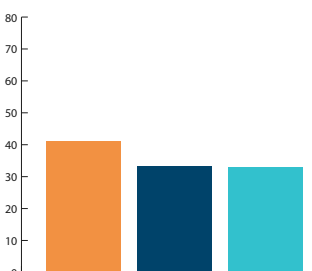
	2025	2023	2021
Applied for external finance	6%	13%	37%
Considered applying but didn't	35%	39%	20%
Not considered applying	55%	46%	43%
Don't know/prefer not to say	4%	3%	N/A

	2025
Didn't want to take on additional risk	38%
Time pressures/lack of resources prevented application	34%
Lack of finance offering suitable terms/lack of suitable products	24%

Opinions on external finance were as follows:



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



- 41%** Business growth/business plans
- 33%** Financial advice e.g. accounting, cash flow, general running of the business
- 33%** Impact measurement

