



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Business in Wellington

What Local Businesses told us:

Between February and March 2026, Wellington Shire Council asked local businesses to share how things are going and what support would help most right now. 64 local businesses responded including sole traders, small businesses, home-based operators, shopfronts, and community organisations. This summary highlights what we heard:

Who Took Part

- Most respondents were small or micro businesses
- Many were owner-operators
- Businesses came from retail, hospitality, services, trades, agriculture and community sectors
- Business owners ranged widely in age - with many balancing work, family and community commitments

Biggest Challenges Facing Businesses

Businesses told us they are dealing with multiple pressures at the same time. From written responses, the most common challenges were:

- **Finding staff** - *Difficulty attracting and keeping skilled, reliable staff, including volunteers and apprentices.*
- **Rising costs** - *Rent, fuel, insurance, wages, utilities, materials and freight costs are increasing - squeezing margins.*
- **Finding customers** - *Softer consumer spending, seasonal trade, online competition and reduced foot traffic.*
- **Not enough time** - *Long hours, admin burdens and work-life balance pressures mean owners are often "working in" the business, not on it.*
- **Marketing and technology** - *Feeling overwhelmed by social media, online platforms and changing digital tools.*
- **Rules and compliance** - *Navigating permits, regulations, workplace requirements and procurement processes can be complex and time-consuming.*

What Businesses Said They Need

Across the survey, businesses asked for practical, easy-to-access support, including:

- Help reaching more customers through effective marketing
- Clear, plain-English information about Council processes and permits
- Short, practical learning opportunities (online or recorded)
- Better connection and communication with Council, especially in smaller towns
- Support that saves time, not adds more complexity

What Council Is Doing Next

Council is using this feedback to:

- Improve how we communicate with and engage local businesses
- Design support that is practical, targeted and flexible
- Strengthen relationships with businesses across all towns
- Focus on actions that help businesses save time, reduce confusion and build confidence

Thank you

This survey is part of an ongoing conversation. Council is committed to continuing to listen and work alongside local businesses to support a strong and resilient local economy.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their experiences. Your feedback is helping shape how Council supports businesses now and into the future.

To keep up to date with new opportunities or support check out the Taking Care of Business email by [signing up here](#).

