

Final research report for enterpriseGY

Creating and sustaining enterprise in Great Yarmouth – an outcome study



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Executive summary

The 'creating and sustaining enterprise in Great Yarmouth outcome study' was conducted over a period of three months, at a time of economic change and increased interest the role of enterprise in the United Kingdom.

In response to the research question 'what makes a difference in creating and sustaining business growth in the Great Yarmouth borough?' quantitative and qualitative analysis demonstrates where enterpriseGY have delivered outcomes and highlights areas for future development.

The evaluation of enterpriseGY used a number of indicators including

- business characteristics
- survival rates
- business outcomes
- feedback on services delivered by enterpriseGY
- Identification of future business support needs.

The Final National Evaluation of LEGI and the Annual Small Business Survey were used in the study design and the analysis to enable triangulation with the national picture.

The research sample consisted of all businesses recorded on the enterpriseGY database (483 start up businesses) with a start date from 1st March 2008

In total 100 businesses participated in a telephone interview, a sample of 20.7% 161 businesses were not contactable.

The analysis is reliable and robust to support conclusions. Qualitative analysis qualifies and supports the quantitative evidence.

In summary we conclude that:

- enterpriseGY has had a positive impact in terms of encouraging new enterprise and supporting new business in Great Yarmouth
- where businesses had failed it was attributed to external factors such as the economic climate and a lack of trade, rather than to a lack of business support from enterpriseGY.
- enterpriseGY have successfully engaged with individuals and have helped change the local enterprise culture by making people less risk averse and more entrepreneurial
- enterpriseGY have contributed to an increase in new businesses in Great Yarmouth. There is a perception that the type of service offered by enterpriseGY is particularly needed in Great Yarmouth.

- enterpriseGY have delivered quality client centered support and advice and provided a continuum of pre-start, start-up and post start-up support.
- enterpriseGY have been effective in supporting a client group in an area with high levels of deprivation.
- enterpriseGY have been effective in establishing very good awareness of the organisation amongst service users and have achieved high levels of customer satisfaction.
- enterpriseGY services would be recommended by local businesses to other businesses.

Drawing on the analysis it is recommended that enterpriseGY could further improve customer satisfaction by the following:

- enable all staff to deliver a high level of customer service, and by articulating clearly to clients rejected for funding applications or service requests, the reasons for the refusal.
- to satisfy service user demand in a reduced funding environment enterpriseGY should consider prioritising the provision of training, business advice and mentoring.
- enterpriseGY should examine the cost benefits of providing free catering at courses and events. Whilst it may encourage participation, it also carries a risk of portraying expenditure that is perceived as unnecessary or which could be put to better use.
- enterpriseGY should explore the potential to deliver increased training provision, advice and support to existing businesses in marketing and advertising.
- it may be useful for enterpriseGY to explore the potential to contribute more to strategically matching new business start up to market need.
- to commission external evaluations on an ongoing basis to identify where outcomes and outputs are delivered against national indicators, to identify gaps and to assist in the planning of forward strategies

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Priory Research Services (PRS) were commissioned by enterpriseGY (eGY) to undertake the creating and sustaining enterprise in Great Yarmouth outcome study over a period of three months. The key objective was to deliver an outcome report that responds to the research question 'what makes a difference in creating and sustaining business growth in the Great Yarmouth borough?'

To facilitate this the report presents the findings and draws attention to how the objectives of enterpriseGY are met, identifies gaps in service provision and highlights areas for future development.

This research has coincided with a time of economic change and renewed interest in the role enterprise plays in growing the UK economy.

SECTION 1: METHODOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS

Researchers from PRS contacted or attempted to make contact by telephone with all businesses (in the database provided by eGY) with a start date from 1st March 2008, the rationale for this focused on involving businesses which meant that some businesses were already established when they engaged with eGY services whilst others were at the start up stage in their business. The method of postal survey (used in a previous study for eGY) had yielded low response rates and therefore telephone interviews lasting between 15 and 20 minutes were employed for the study. Questions were pre coded and prepared for quantitative analysis and open questions for thematic analysis.

Respondents were asked about:

- business characteristics
- survival rates
- business outcomes
- feedback on services delivered by eGY
- Identification of future business support needs.

Within the study design and where possible similar questions to the Final National Evaluation of LEGI and the Annual Small Business Survey were used to enable triangulation with the national picture.

The sample

PRS attempted to contact all businesses in an enterpriseGY (eGY) database of 483 start up businesses with a start date from 1st March 2008 onwards. Exactly 100 respondents agreed to be interviewed by phone, providing a sample of 20.7% 161 respondents were found to be unavailable either because they had moved on and not left forwarding details, or their contact details were incorrect. In total 661 telephone calls were made to local businesses.

Please note that although most respondents answered all questions some were not able or declined to answer some questions so the total number of responses may vary between questions. In some cases percentages have been rounded up which may on occasion result in a total of over 100%.

1.1 Demographic profile

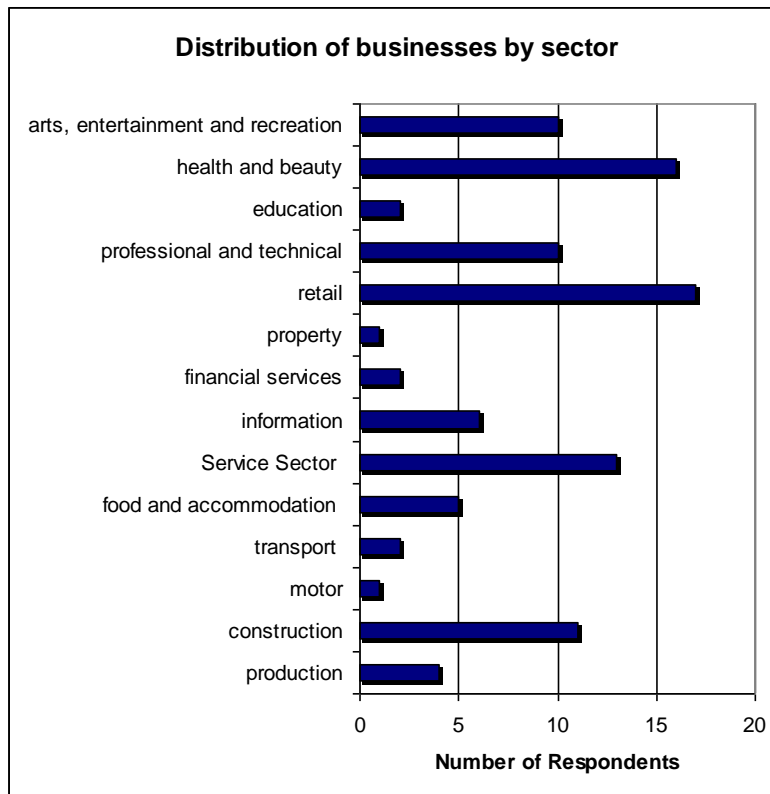
The vast majority of respondents (93%) were of White British ethnicity. This broadly reflects the ethnicity profile recorded in the GYBC Main Economic Indicators report 2010 which reported 97% White British ethnicity. In terms of nationality, using the eGY classification, 2% were Portuguese, 1% West Indian, 1% South African and 1% White other.

There were slightly more females (54%) interviewed than males (46%). 11% of participants were single parents, of whom nine out of eleven were female. 7% were registered as having a disability.

In terms of age, there were very few young people in the sample with only 5% of respondents aged 25 or less; 30% were aged 26-45 and over half (54%) aged 46 and above. Ninety four percent of respondents were the sole owner of their business and 6% were partners.

1.2 Distribution by sector

Businesses were classified adhering to the eGY classification system. Table 1 shows that nearly a third of businesses were in either retail or health and beauty (17% and 16% respectively). Services such as gardening and cleaning accounted for 13%, construction 11%, arts and entertainment 10%, and professional and technical 10%. Only 5% of businesses were operating in food or accommodation services.



When business type is cross tabulated with gender the most noticeable difference is the perhaps unsurprising concentration of women within health and beauty which constitutes

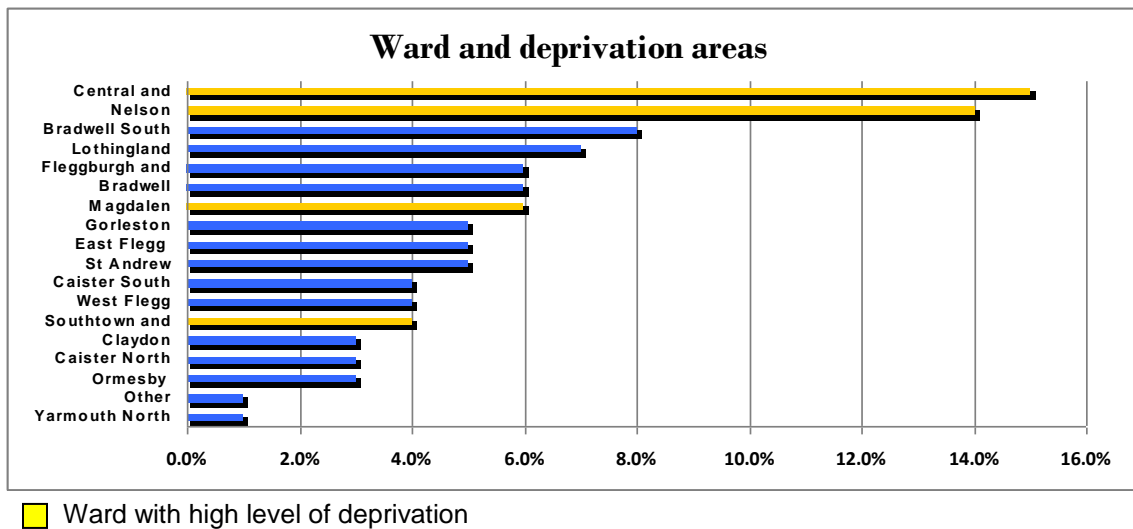
14% of female businesses compared to only 2% of men's and secondly within retail which constitutes 10% of female businesses compared to 6% of men's.

There is a higher proportion of males operating in professional and technical businesses (7% of male businesses compared to 3% of female), and in construction (8% of male compared to 3% of female).

1.3 Location of businesses

Table 2 shows the distribution of the 100 businesses in the sample within the borough. If we assume Central & Northgate, Magdalen, Nelson and Southtown and Cobholm to be deprived wards, we can see that 39% of businesses were located in deprived areas. Both Central & Northgate and Nelson show the highest numbers of start ups with 15 and 14 start up businesses in each respectively.

Table 2: The distribution of businesses within GYBC



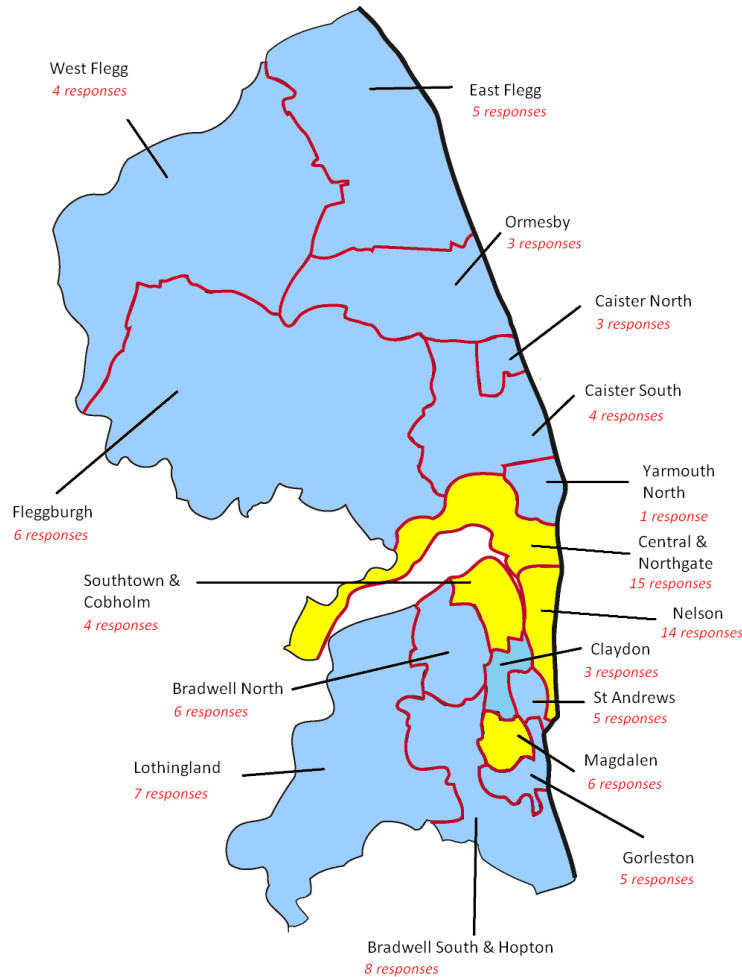


Figure 1: Map to show location and areas of response to survey by ward (most deprived areas highlighted in yellow)

1.4 Legal status

Some respondents were unsure what the legal status was of their business but we were able to collect this data on 85% of start ups. Of those, 69 (81.2%) of the businesses were sole traders, 5 (5.9%) partnerships, 9 (10.6%) a limited company and 2 (2.4%) a social enterprise.

This contrasts with a survey of business start ups in the South West by SWRDA in July 2010 compiled using the business start up database (BSU) provided by Bank Search which found that around half of new start ups were sole traders and a third limited companies. The South West dataset “reflects the openings of first current accounts from a bank’s small business product range, covering mainstream start-ups (businesses new to banking) and businesses previously operated through a personal current account.” The SWRDA report notes that “A high number of sole traders can be an indicator of ‘necessity’ entrepreneurship, pointing towards stress in the labour market rather than health.”

The difference in the eGY survey could reflect that Great Yarmouth is an area of deprivation, and that (as the open comments discussed later show) many of eGY’s

clients are first time entrepreneurs who are not perhaps at the stage of transferring from operating their business through their personal bank account to operating it through a business account. The earlier study by PRS in March 2009 'A research study into Start up Businesses in Great Yarmouth' found that 82% of start ups had not started a business before. Section 4.9 below shows that for the majority of the sample eGY are the only source of business advice and that only 1 start up had used bank business support.

There is no obvious clustering by legal status in terms of location; the limited companies were distributed across seven wards including deprived wards – Bradwell North, Bradwell South & Hopton, Fleggburgh and West Flegg, Gorleston, Lothingland, Magdalen, and Southtown & Cobholm.

SECTION 2: SURVIVAL RATES AND LENGTH OF TIME IN BUSINESS

2.1 Business survival

84 businesses (85%) were operating or preparing to operate at the time of being interviewed. In the sample 15 (15%) businesses had stopped operating. Of those operating at the time of the interview over a third (36.8%) were in the first 2 years of operating and nearly two thirds had been operating for over 2 years, as shown below in table 3.

Assuming the sample to be representative, this would mean that of the total database of 483 start-ups 411 are operating or in the pre start phase, and 72 have ceased business. 178 will be in the first 2 years of operating.

Table 3: Length of time business has been operating

<i>Length of time operating</i>	<i>Actual no.</i>	<i>% of sample</i>
0-6 months	7	8.3%
7-12 months	15	17.9%
13-18 months	7	8.3%
19-23 months	2	2.4%
24 + months	53	63.1%
Total	84	100%

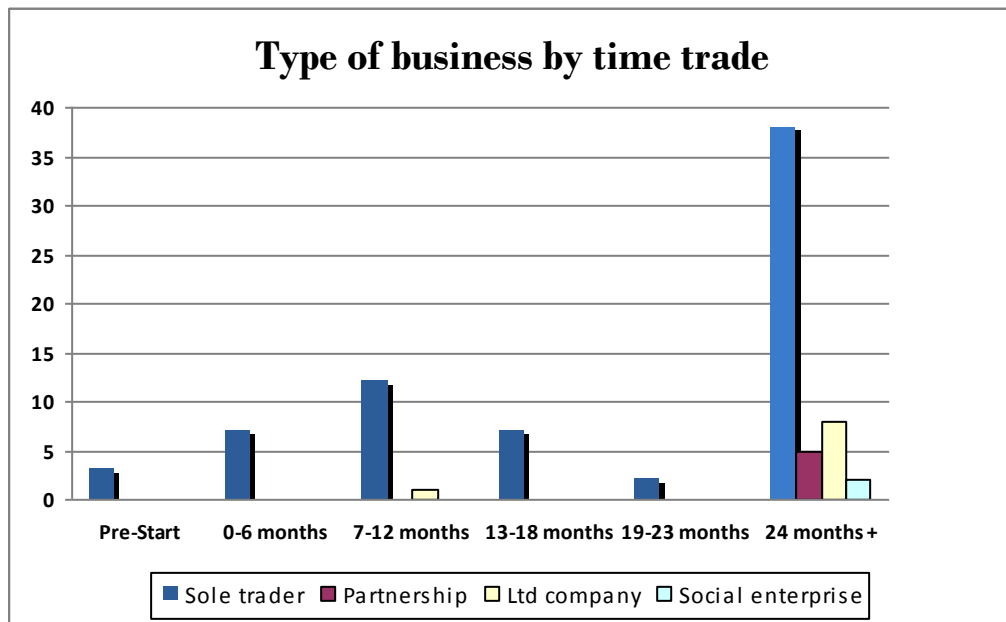
Table 4 shows the numbers of start ups still operating cross tabulated with the age of the respondent. From this we can see that no young people aged 25 or under stopped operating and that the greatest attrition in percentage terms occurs in the 26-35 year age group where six out of fifteen businesses ceased operation. However these figures should be treated with caution given the small numbers in some categories and the variation in the sample over how long businesses have been operating.

Table 4: Still operating cross tabulated by age

<i>Age</i>	<i>% still operating</i>
18-25	100%
26-35	60%
36-45	88%
46-59	78%
60+	62.5%

Table 5 shows the legal status of businesses cross tabulated with their length of time trading. This shows that with the exception of one limited company, all businesses that are either a limited company or social enterprise have been trading for at least 24 months.

Table 5: Type of business by time trade



2.2 Why businesses stopped operating

Of the 15 businesses that had stopped operating 4 had stopped more than 2 years ago as shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6: When did your business stop operating?

0-6 months ago	2
6-12 months ago	3
12-18 months ago	2
18-24 months ago	4
More than 2 years ago	4
Total	15

There were five reasons given why people had stopped operating:

- the lack of business (5 people)
- the economic climate (2 people)
- a change in family or domestic circumstances such as having a baby or personal health (4 people)
- to take up paid employment (2 people).
-

Lack of business and the difficulty competing in the economic climate with other businesses were the most common reasons:

"I had a large contract with Thurston. They closed down and I also folded."

"People didn't want to pay the money; I was working at a loss".

Two start ups blamed the economic climate, one citing *"The credit crunch, competition with bigger businesses who had funds for marketing and financial backing."*

Two respondents took up paid employment: *"I was offered another job full time. The business was only just ticking over so I went for full time work"*

Four people attributed it to health or to family circumstances.

2.3 How could eGY have helped prevent businesses from closing?

The 15 respondents who had stopped operating were asked what, if anything, eGY could have done to help make their business successful.

Six people replied that there was nothing eGY could have done to prevent their business closure:

"It was a family type business so I don't think that they could have [done anything]"

"I received all the help I needed"

"Everything that they offer really helps businesses to grow and flourish"

"They couldn't have done anymore"

"They did everything they could have done for me"

"Nothing. The lack of work was due to the economic climate"

Two people suggested that eGY could help with premises, for example: *"eGY could offer premises for storing only, not trading, at cheap rent"*.

There were four other suggestions for how eGY could have helped:

- *"Making more business contacts, linking to prospective customers"*
- *"Business plan help"*
- *"Continued support and advice"*
- *"When businesses are starting up they need help there and then, not told to come back in two or three months time."*

SECTION 3: BUSINESS GROWTH

3.1 Employment

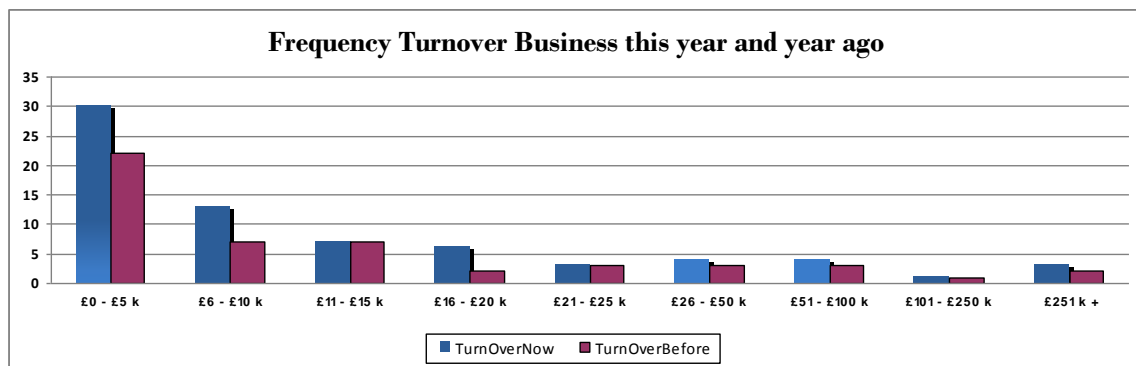
Most of the businesses interviewed did not currently employ any staff but twelve (13.8%) respondents were currently employing staff. One respondent employed 9 full time employees, and 4 employed 1-3 full time employees. One respondent employed 10 part time employees, and 8 employed 1-4 part time staff. Within the sample there was a total of 17 full time staff employed and 24 part time staff employed. This does not include the owners. (Including the owners there are a total of 141 people employed.) As the table 7 below demonstrates there has not been an increase in the number of staff employed compared to a year ago.

Table 7: How many staff do you employ, excluding yourself?

No. of staff excluding the owner	F/T staff now	P/T staff now	F/T staff a year ago	P/T staff a year ago
1	1	5	2	3
2	2	1	1	2
3	1	1	1	0
4	0	1	0	0
5	0	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	1	0
9	1	0	1	0
10	0	1	0	1
Total staff employed	17	24	24	17

3.2 Turnover

Businesses were asked to estimate their turnover this year and for the previous year if applicable. The results are shown in the graph below.



Although the vast majority of the sample (56 businesses, 78%) reports a modest turnover of below £20K, there are some noticeably high turnovers with 8 businesses

reporting a turnover of £51K or more, including 3 businesses who report a turnover of £251K or more.

61% of the sample reported a turnover of £10K or less, 18% reported a turnover of £11-20K, 10% 21-50K, 6% 51-100K, 1% 101-250K, 4% 251K or more.

When asked if their turnover had increased or decreased when compared to the previous year, more people reported an increase as shown in the table below. This supports the evidence of growth suggested by the increase in employment levels seen above. (The sample is smaller for these questions because many businesses had not been trading for over a year, and some declined to answer or did not know.)

Table 8: Did your turnover increase or decrease compared to the year before?

<i>Turnover</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Increased	25	45%
Stayed the same	19	35%
Decreased	7	13%
Don't know/decline to answer	4	7%
	55	100%

Respondents were also asked if they expected their turnover next year to be more or less than this year. Over a third of those who answered expected to see growth and only 12 respondents expected to see a reduction.

Table 9: Do you think your turnover next year will be more or less than this year?

<i>Turnover</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>%</i>
Expect more	35	50%
Expect the same	11	16%
Expect less	12	17%
Don't know/ decline to answer	12	17%
	70	100%

By comparison the UEA survey of businesses (all businesses and not just start ups) in 2008, 'Great Yarmouth Business Needs' found that 41% of businesses were aiming to expand moderately and 19% to grow rapidly. 23% were planning to remain the same size and only 5% planned to downsize or close.

It is interesting to contextualise the entrepreneurs' expectations against the obstacles to business success that they foresee which are discussed in section 5.1. Although 66% of the sample do not expect to see any reduction in turnover next year the most common obstacles identified were related to the economic climate and finance.

3.3 Profit and loss

Respondents were asked whether they made a profit or loss in the last financial year, and in the previous year if they were trading then, taking into account all sources of income. The results, shown in table 10 below, broadly suggest an improvement in business performance with an actual and percentage increase in the number of businesses reporting a profit, and a decline in the number reporting a loss.

Table 10: Profit in this financial year and in the year before

	<i>This year</i>	<i>Last year</i>
Made a profit	44 (64%)	28 (48%)
Made a loss	17 (25%)	23 (40%)
Don't know/decline to say	8 (12%)	7 (12%)

(Please note that the percentages have been rounded up so will not always equal 100%.)

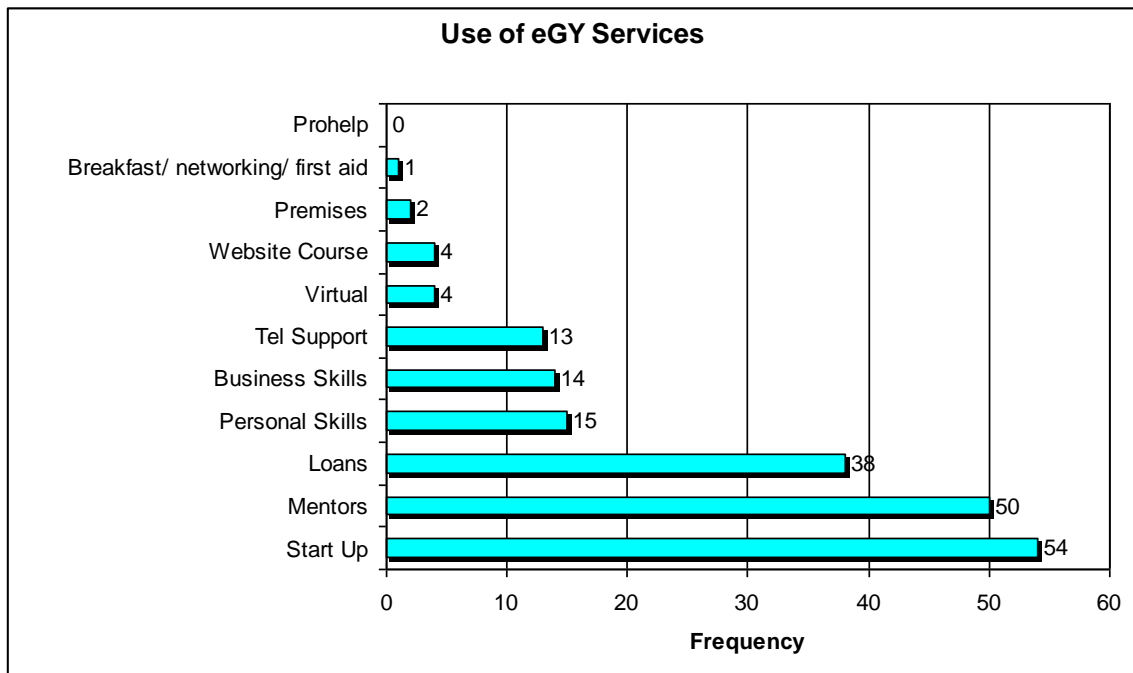
SECTION 4: USE OF AND SATISFACTION WITH eGY SERVICES

4.1 Use of eGY services

80% of respondents had used eGY services, with most using more than one service. 20 respondents reported that they had not made any use of eGY services.

The three most commonly used services were the Start up courses which 54 respondents had used, Business mentors which 50 respondents had used, and Loans, funds and grants which 38 respondents had used. Personal skills training was used by 15 respondents, Business skills training by 14 and Ongoing telephone support by 13 respondents.

This can be seen in the graph below.



Of those who had not used any eGY services three people commented that this was because they had been turned away, for example “*I asked for help but did not get any*”, and one person explained “It was impossible to take time out when the courses became available.”

Table 11 below shows the use of eGY services according to the length of time the business has been trading. The table shows the numbers of businesses of that age using each service, and what % that constitutes of businesses of that age. For example,

it is apparent that the highest use of mentors occurs in start ups that have been operating for less than a year, of which 68% had accessed a business mentor.

Table 11: The use of eGY services according to length of time the business has been in operation

Services used by duration of business	Pre start – 1 year	13-23 months	24+ months	Duration not known	Total
Networking			1		1
Breakfast Meeting			1		1
First Aid			1		1
Business Premises		1	1		2
Virtual Business Support		1	3		4
Creating a website course		1	3		4
On going telephone support	3	2	7 (13%)	1	13
Business Skills Training		2	10 (19%)	2	14
Personal skills training	2	3	7 (13%)	3	15
Loans, Funds and Grants	9 (41%)	7 (77%)	22 (41%)		38
Business Mentors	15 (68%)	5 (55%)	30 (57%)		50
Start up course	13 (59%)	8 (89%)	31 (58%)	2	54
Total of service uses	42	30	117	8	197
Total of businesses	22	9	53	15	100

The table shows good use of Start up courses, business mentors and financial support across all business ages. Of start ups that have operated for 24 months or more 30 (57%) have used mentors and 31 (58%) used a start up course. High percentages of businesses that have operated for 13-23 months have also used these two services, although it must be noted that the numbers in this category are small.

Proportionally the highest use of eGY services occurs in the 13-23 months band who used an average of 3.3% eGY services each, compared to 2.2% services each by the 24+ category, and 1.9% services each by the 0-1 year category.

Respondents were asked specifically which eGY services they had used, as opposed to services delivered by partners such as NWES and it is interesting to note the high usage recorded in businesses that have been operating for over 24 months, suggesting that eGY have been effective in building brand awareness.

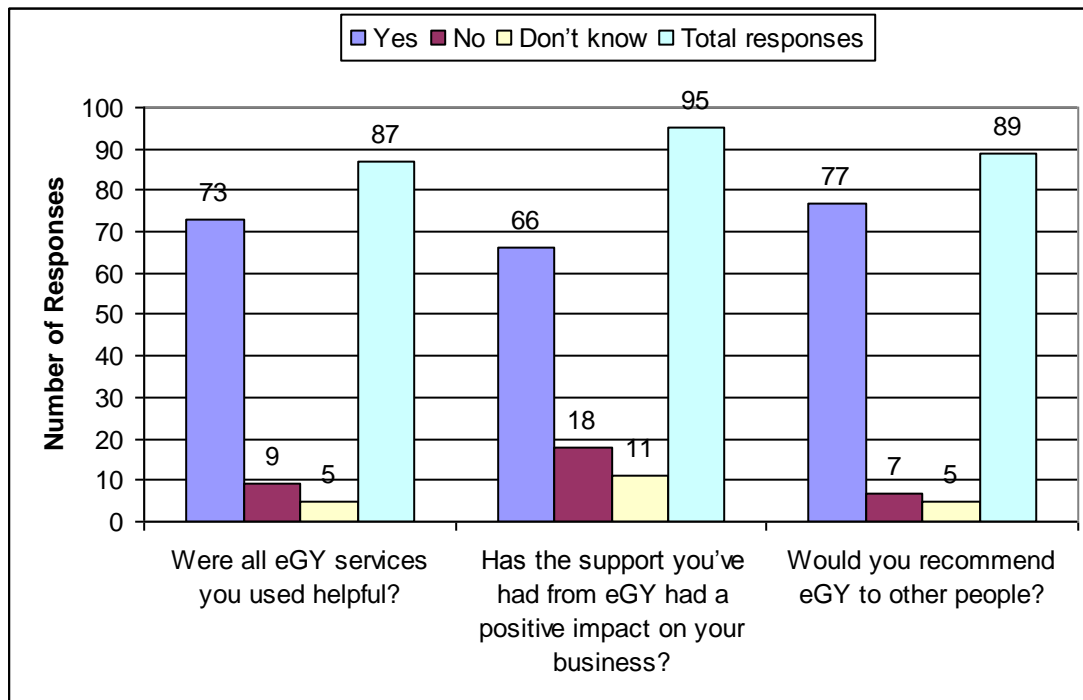
4.2 How do service users rate eGY?

The vast majority of respondents were highly positive about eGY services.

- 73 respondents (84%) reported that they found all the services that they had used helpful and only 9 (10%) said that not all the services had been helpful. 5 respondents (6%) did not know.
- Similarly 77 respondents (87%) said they would recommend eGY to a friend and only 7 (8%) would not. 5 (6%) did not know.
- 66 respondents (69%) said that eGY had had a positive impact on their business and 18 (19%) said it did not. 11 people (12%) did not know.

(Please note that percentages have been rounded up so do not always equal 100%.)

This is shown diagrammatically in the bar chart below.

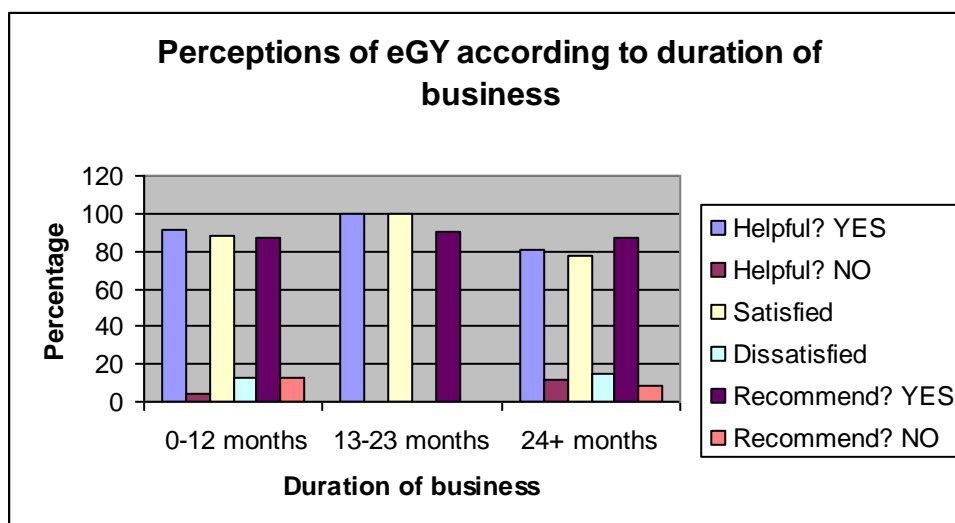


4.3 Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the service that they received from eGY overall. 62 respondents (65%) were very satisfied, and 11 (12%)

were fairly satisfied. 1 (1%) respondent was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 3 (3%) were dissatisfied and 14 (15%) were very dissatisfied. 4 (4%) respondents did not know.

The graph below shows the proportion of businesses within each age of business category that found all the eGY services helpful or not, the proportion that were satisfied or dissatisfied, and the proportion that would or would not recommend eGY to a friend. (The chart does not display the proportion that did not know or that were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.)



The graph illustrates that the proportion that found all eGY service helpful is high across all bands but highest in those that have been operating for less than two years. Similarly the proportion that is satisfied is high across all bands but highest in the first two years. The proportion within each group that would recommend eGY is high across all bands but broadly similar.

Interestingly when cross tabulated by legal business status, satisfaction with eGY remains generally high across all bands as shown in the table below, although it must be noted that the numbers in some categories are low.

The table also shows that although some businesses felt that the eGY services had not had a positive impact, most would still recommend eGY. Similarly in section 2.3 which looks at business closures, it was found that 6 out of the 15 businesses that had closed said that there was nothing eGY could have done to help keep their business in operation.

Table 12: Satisfaction and impact by legal status

<i>Legal status</i>	<i>Positive impact? YES</i>	<i>Positive impact? No</i>	<i>Recommend to a friend? YES</i>	<i>Recommend to a friend? NO</i>
Sole trader	54 (78%)	12 (17%)	58 (71%)	7 (10%)
Partnership	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5 (100%)	0
Ltd company	7 (78%)	1 (11%)	9 (100%)	0
Social enterprise	2 (100%)	0	2 (100%)	0

4.4 How has support received from eGY impacted on business?

As shown above, over two thirds (69%) of respondents said that the support they had received from eGY had had a positive impact on their business. Respondents gave a range of reasons why this was so, generating a large volume of very positive comments about eGY. All the open comments are contained within Appendix A.

The reasons why people felt the eGY support had been positively impactful can be grouped into five main areas:

- **eGY provided good support across a range of areas for new business start ups**

“It had a positive impact in all ways. Invaluable information, advice and support. I wouldn’t have been able to start without the grant.”

- **With eGY’s support people felt more confident in their ability to start up or develop their business**

“[It gave me the confidence that I can do it and knowing someone is there to help if anything crops up that I need advice on”

- **Financial support from eGY made a big difference**

“The grant enabled me to expand the structure and create more jobs”

- **Thanks to eGY people acquired good business advice and skills development**

“They were brilliant. They answered any questions clearly. They were constructively critical which helped. They had time for me then and now with aftercare by phone or email.”

- **eGY have provided good ongoing support and encouragement**

“All information was made available. I was reassured that my business would work out. They were positive and interested in my ideas. Also I’ve had two after care calls to ask if everything was alright.”

18 (19%) respondents said that the support from eGY had not had a positive impact on their business. There were relatively few open comments given about why this was so, but 8 can be grouped into two areas:

- **refusal of funding requests** (which 4 people commented on):

“The grant was refused. That was what I needed”

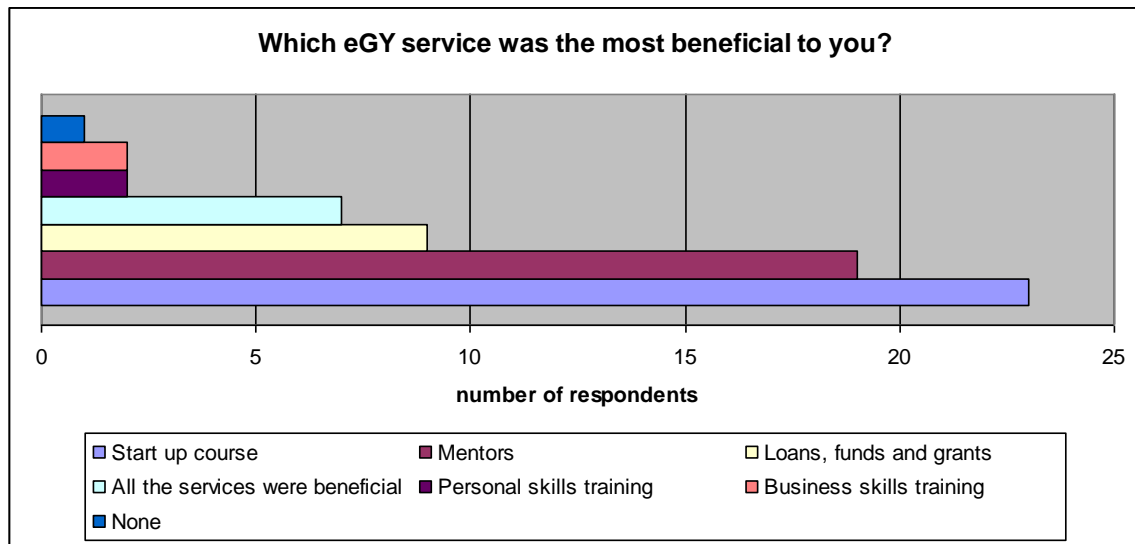
- **perceptions of poor customer service** (which 4 people commented on):

“There was no advice or support given at all. They did not want to know at all”

This very low level of negative feedback contrasts markedly with the large volume of positive comments.

4.5 Which eGY services were the most beneficial?

When asked which eGY service was the most beneficial, the most frequently cited were the Start up course (23 respondents) and the Business mentors (19 respondents). 7 respondents said that all the services were equally helpful. This is shown in the chart below.



4.6 What did service user's value about eGY services?

Respondents were asked why they deemed those services the most helpful and their open comments (attached as Appendix B) again display a high level of appreciation of eGY services. The reasons why people valued eGY services can be grouped into 4 key areas:

- **eGY provided valuable business advice and training**

"I didn't have a clue how to start up a business like sorting out the tax and all that. It was really helpful. They told you everything you needed to know so you didn't make a mistake"

- **eGY provided key funding**

"The £15000 grant got my materials in, which I still use. I would not have been able to start without them. I bought downgraded tools so that I could get all tools that I needed"

- **eGY provided motivation and encouragement**

“It brought me out of myself. It helped my confidence. It helped me to know what steps to take”

- **eGY provided helpful mentoring**

“Sally was my mentor, she was very helpful. She always had answers to my questions. She always knew exactly what had to be done with sound advice and helped me out a lot”

4.7 Which eGY service was the least helpful?

When asked which eGY service was the least helpful the survey drew an extremely limited response. Only 12 respondents (12%) identified a service and only a few people gave open comments. As before, the very limited amount of feedback from service users on this question contrasts noticeably with the substantial volume of feedback volunteered on why eGY services had been helpful.

Of the 12 respondents who had identified a service as being unhelpful, 4 people selected the Start up course which they had found of limited use:

“I was already informed about business plans. I had to go to the course so that I could get a grant. I did pick up a few new ideas. I was business orientated already, I did know everything.”

Three people found the loans, funds and grants service to be the least helpful. As the following comment shows, this was sometimes because the respondent had not been successful in being awarded funds:

“I wanted to have help with a ‘Creating a website course’. I did not get help because I would have had to pay £500 in which I did not have & eGY could not help further with this”

The mentoring service was selected by 1 person as was the virtual business support, the personal skills training, the business skills training, and the website course.

4.8 Would people recommend eGY to others?

As seen above 77 respondents (87%) said they would recommend eGY to a friend and only 7 (8%) would not. Respondents were asked why they would or wouldn't recommend eGY which as before prompted a large volume of positive comments and a very small number of negative comments, all of which are contained in Appendix C.

The positive comments can be broadly grouped into four reasons:

- **Because eGY provides a valuable service to people wanting to start a business:**

"I think that eGY reinforces people's dreams – it keeps them alive and they encourage people to go for it while giving people a structure. People in Great Yarmouth need a place like this to advise them and encourage people to have their own businesses."

- **Because eGY offer a helpful, constructive approach and support**

"It's good to talk about your ideas with someone to get the right direction you need to keep going in. It points you towards what you need to get prepared for. It's like therapy to talk things over first"

- **Because eGY are specialists and professional**

"eGY have got a lot to offer - mentoring, all types of information that you need about starting a business, lots of training, courses, all practical things. Also grants and they are very professional. I did recommend two friends to go there and they both are in successful businesses now"

- **Because eGY offer good quality information, advice and guidance**

"People need the guidance and encouragement to try their own ideas of business. eGY present their information simply. They get you over the first hurdles of business. Instead of stumbling blindly they show you the legal side which has been very helpful."

- **Because eGY offer useful training**

"Definitely [would recommend]. The seminars were excellent; we were told how to promote business. It was invaluable. I will be phoning again for more advice"

- **Because eGY offer a helpful, constructive approach and support**

"I have recommended eGY already because I think that it is very good support. They care for you there. It is good for others especially as there are a great number of redundancies. Some of these people may want to consider going in to their own businesses with their redundancy pay. They make you think about things"

There were only 6 comments on why people would not recommend eGY, two of which relate to a negatively perceived single encounter with an individual. For example: *"I found the person that I enquired from very unprofessional. I know that it was only one particular person but I came away feeling I had wasted my time. They were unhelpful"*

4.9 Reliance on eGY for business advice

Only 31 respondents had used other sources of business advice, indicating that for a substantial proportion (64%) of start-ups eGY had been their only source of business

advice. The responses also suggest that eGY have been effective in establishing a good brand awareness of eGY among clients. This suggests a positive improvement from the position in 2009: the previous PRS study recommended greater profiling and promotion of the eGY programme.

The most common other source of business advice was Business Link which 8 people had used, the web which 4 people had used and HMRC which 2 people had used.

The following services were each used by 1 person:

NWES, Prince's Trust, Novus Centre (Business Essentials), Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, Aspire Lowestoft, the Shaw Trust, Federation of Small Businesses, an accountant, the Natwest Bank, business books, a college, Enterprise Women.

SECTION 5: VISION OF FUTURE BUSINESS SUPPORT NEEDS

5.1 Obstacles to business success

Respondents were asked what they saw as the main obstacles to the success of their business and 90 people identified obstacles. The responses can be seen in Appendix D.

The most common obstacles, identified by 32 people, were related to finance and the economic climate:

- 15 people identified the recession which was causing either a lack of spending and/or a lack of financing.

"People are not doing so much as they used to ... because of cut backs"

- 17 people identified a lack of income, funding or profit and problems with cash flow.

"No money being spent. Buying new stock is expensive and I need to keep up with bills for everything which is very expensive"

The next most frequent obstacle, cited by 23 people, was the need for advertising or marketing, and/or the costs of that.

"Getting known. At the moment it is by word of mouth. Advertising is expensive. I work from a car with no advertising as I cannot afford it. Money is not coming in at the moment."

The third most frequently cited obstacle, mentioned by 13 respondents, was the lack of business, usually related to either the recession, the competition from other businesses or to a lack of advertising.

"Competition. People undercut each other. Getting customers, advertising too expensive"

Competition from other businesses was specifically cited as an obstacle by 11 respondents.

“Competition with others doing the same. The Norfolk area is hard to sell products in mainly because of my costs”

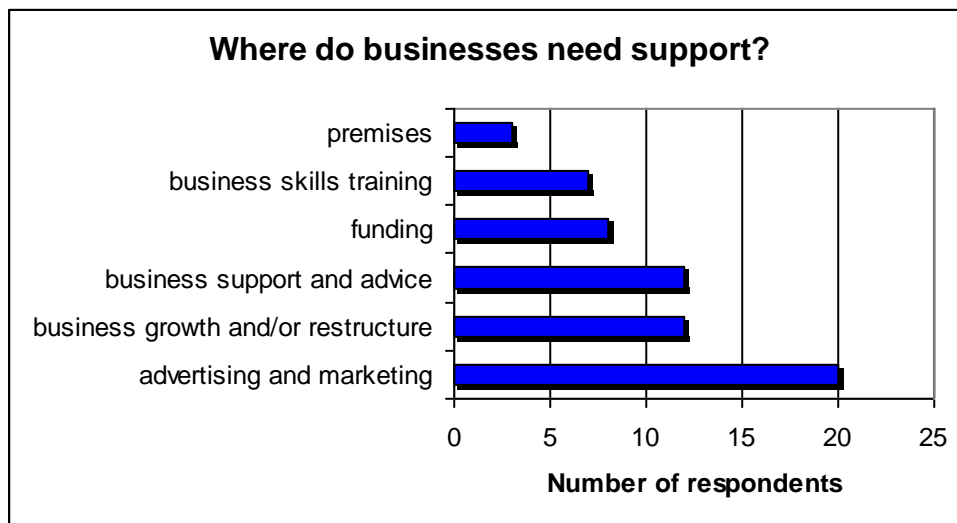
Lastly 5 people identified the need for better premises or the cost of premises as a main obstacle to success.

“Money to get premises, It is very expensive to start up in premises”

The obstacles identified show similarity with the results found in the March 2009 PRS study in which respondents had reported “that because of the recorded economic deprivation within the borough that often it was difficult to increase profit margins and see business growth. Some respondents stated that because of the amount of competition in their field it was difficult to develop their business and attract new clients.”

5.2 What areas of business support are needed?

Respondents were asked what key areas of business support their business would need over the next year. 49 people (49% of the sample) identified areas in which they needed support and their responses are shown in Appendix E. The bar chart below shows the most frequently identified needs.



The identified needs fall into 6, often overlapping, areas:

- **Help with advertising and marketing.** 20 people (40%) identified this as a need *“Help, advice, funding for advertising -anything so that I will be made known for my business. Then I think it will expand with this type of nurture”.*

As mentioned earlier this was also identified in the 2009 PRS report.

- **Help achieving business growth and/or restructuring.** 12 people (24%) identified this as a need *“Advice for the next stage of moving to grow my business and hopefully to be able to employ staff”*

- **Business support and advice.** 12 people (24%) identified this as a need
“Ongoing support with the mentor, keeping up to date with the industry”
- **Help with funding.** 8 people (16%) identified this as a need
“I’m trying to expand to do lessons so I need funding or help to know where I can get funding from.”
- **Business skills training.** 7 people (14%) identified this as a need.
“Courses about paperwork, book keeping etc”
- **Help with premises.** 3 people (6%) identified this as a need
“High rents in this area. Premises needed with lower rents”

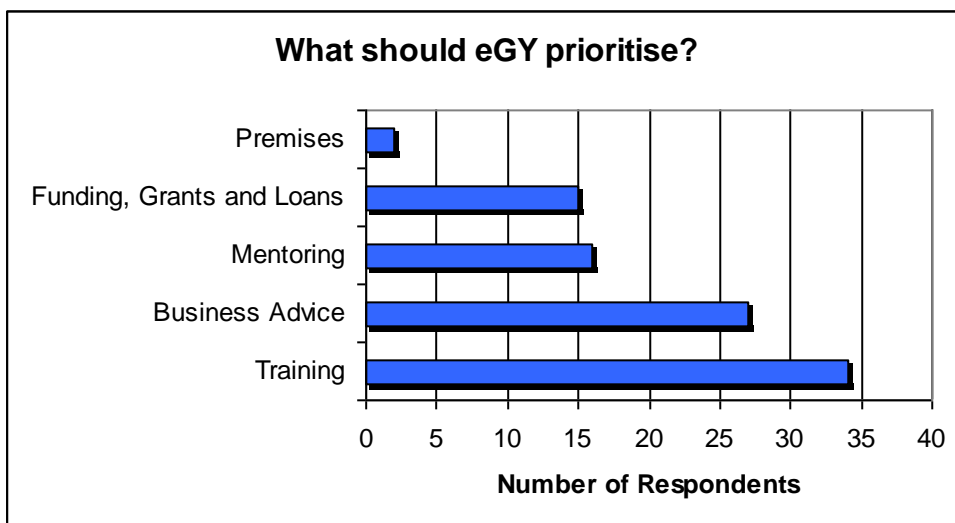
Please note that because respondents often identified more than one business need the percentage totals equal more than 100%.

Again there are some similar messages to those heard in the 2009 PRS study in which some respondents suggested that “more information would have been useful [in the business courses] in areas such as marketing and advertising.”

5.3 What should eGY prioritise?

Respondents were asked what they thought was the most important area for eGY to focus on in terms of business support for the future if operating in a reduced funding environment.

This generated a large response and once again there were many very positive comments about eGY. 76 people (76%) identified areas for focus which are shown in the chart below. Most people selected several services. Their comments are contained within Appendix F.



Many people were reluctant to envisage any cuts in services because of their high regard for eGY:

"I think eGY should not be forced to make any cuts at all as it is all valuable help. Everything is explained. The Government wants people to go into small businesses so they should still encourage this through the enterprise. I give eGY 10/10. They should not change. Have no budget cuts with them"

The most frequently cited area of service was the provision of training including the Start up courses. 34 people (45%) felt this should be an area of future focus:

"Skills for confidence building, personal skills training and start up courses"

The second most frequently mentioned area of focus was the general provision of business advice which 27 (35%) people identified.

"The business courses and other support is needed. A number you can ring if you need advice on any issues which may turn up"

"A year's after care if or when people get into business. If people get stuck a little it is nice to know that there is someone you can phone for professional advice and support"

The third most frequently mentioned area of focus was the mentoring service. 16 people (21%) identified this.

"One to one mentoring is more useful than groups because it is more personal"

The fourth most frequently mentioned area of focus was funding, grants and loans which was selected by 15 people (20%).

"I think grants as without them some people cannot go forward."

"eGY is almost perfect I would say because of the advice, training and especially because of loans"

Four respondents suggested eGY could reduce costs by reducing the catering provided at courses and events.

SECTION 6: OVERALL VIEWS OF eGY

At the end of the interview respondents were asked "Is there anything else you'd like to add?" and 50 people took the opportunity to express an opinion on eGY.

Their comments, contained in Appendix F, contain 14 (28%) negative comments which are discussed in section 6.2.

6.1 Positive views about eGY

36 comments (72%) expressed several very strongly positive messages about eGY which can be loosely grouped as:

People feel a sense of gratitude to eGY

"I can only be positive about eGY. They help you live your dream"

"I consider I have been very lucky to have had Enterprise GY's help to get Classic Massage off the ground and to be such a successful business"

People attribute some or much of their business success to eGY

"I had excellent support from eGY. If it had not been for them I would never have got started. I wouldn't have done it without them"

"If eGY closes it will be scandalous. There are dedicated people there, it would be wrong to close. I couldn't have done this on my own."

"My invention has taken a long time to get this far into sales but I am definitely getting there with the help of eGY. They have been excellent with helping with marketing which was one of the most important aspects. I progressed with their help"

People perceive that Great Yarmouth needs eGY

"People don't know what running your business involves and eGY gives them that information on all levels, confidence skills and the legal side of things. It would be a big let down if it closed and a huge hit for the town and for the local people. There is a need here"

People feel eGY has a role to play in combating unemployment

"I would be unemployed if it hadn't have been for eGY"

People felt supported and encouraged by eGY

"eGY have helped me a great deal. I am dyslexic and did have some learning difficulties. They helped me to be structured, reinforced my plans, helped me to be confident. They enforced my passion because they were inspirational themselves and the whole environment was inspirational."

People feel eGY made starting a business much easier

"eGY were brilliant. They make it ever so easy. They didn't use any big words. They made everything simple. Most of us were starting up but they made it basic and simple. I'm so satisfied with everything they've done. They gave me such good advice. I was really grateful to them"

6.2 Negative views on eGY

Fourteen people volunteered negative comments about eGY which can be grouped into 4 reasons:

- **They were rejected for funding**

"No funding was available when I went. It had run out but the food looked expensive and must have cost a lot. I think that eGY should not put food out then maybe there would have been funding for other important things"

- **They were not given the service they sought**

“I was very disappointed not to be able to use this service”

- **They received poor customer service**

“Before Christmas a group of us asked eGY to come and help us all concerning websites for business. They did not come because of the snow. I was appalled. Since then there has been no contact from them at all. I think that they are useless at helping people set up their own businesses”

- **There was a lack of follow up.**

“Disappointed with eGY. There was no after care although I contacted several times and no one got back to me. Also contacted Link and the same thing happened. I would have liked more training. Also the financial help was not very much”

SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS

This survey has shown that eGY has had a positive impact in terms of encouraging new enterprise and supporting new business in Great Yarmouth:

eGY have had a positive impact on business success. 69% of respondents said that the support they had received from eGY had had a positive impact on their business. Where businesses had failed it was attributed to external factors such as the economic climate and a lack of trade, rather than to a lack of business support from eGY. There is evidence of business growth (46% report an increase in turnover compared to a year ago, and 64% made a profit this year compared to 48% a year ago) but this has not translated to an increase in the number of additional staff employed.

eGY have successfully engaged with individuals and have helped change the local enterprise culture by making people less risk averse and more entrepreneurial.

Many people would not have known how to start up in business or would not have had the confidence or skills to do so without the input from eGY. eGY’s role in building entrepreneurs’ confidence is seen as being a very important part of the process.

eGY have contributed to an increase in new businesses in Great Yarmouth. There is a perception that the type of service offered by eGY is particularly needed in Great Yarmouth.

The UEA study of business in Great Yarmouth in 2008 found that “the supply of new businesses looks to be modest and, if confirmed by further research suggests greater interventions in the support of entrepreneurship and the support of young businesses are needed to underpin the future of the GY economy.” Just over two years later this survey has found 31 new businesses under 2 years old in the sample which would equate to 178 in the whole database if we assume the sample to be representative.

eGY have delivered quality client centered support and advice and provided a continuum of pre-start, start-up and post start-up support.

Participants in the 2009 PRS study “stated that continued post start-up assistance from the eGY (LEGI) mentoring programme would undoubtedly prove valuable because of the skills and knowledge of the mentors”. This study confirms that the post start up support from mentors has been valuable and that businesses appreciate the continuum of

support. The National LEGI Evaluation found that much of the LEGI impact on business success comes from providing this continuum of support.

eGY have been effective in supporting a client group in an area with high levels of deprivation.

A substantial proportion (64%) of start-ups have shown considerable reliance on eGY for their business advice and not made use of any other sources of business advice. For some people eGY have helped prevent them becoming unemployed.

eGY have effectively provided support to a client group that is different in some ways to those accessing banks' business start up support and which may have additional needs, such as a lack of experience in setting up a business or the need for confidence building.

eGY have been effective in establishing very good awareness of the organisation amongst service users and have achieved high levels of customer satisfaction.

Satisfaction levels with eGY are high across all business duration categories but highest in those that have been operating for less than two years, and across all business status types.

SECTION 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing down from the analysis it is recommended that eGY could further improve customer satisfaction by enabling all staff to deliver a high level of customer service, and by taking care that when clients are being rejected for funding applications or service requests, the reasons for the refusal are very clearly articulated and justified. (see section 4)

- To satisfy service user demand in a reduced funding environment eGY should consider prioritizing the provision of training, business advice and mentoring. (see section 5.3)
- eGY should examine the cost benefits of providing free catering at courses and events. Whilst it may encourage participation, this survey shows it also carries a risk of portraying expenditure that is perceived as unnecessary or which could be put to better use. (see Section 5)
- eGY should explore if it can provide more training, advice and support to existing businesses in marketing and advertising. (see Section 5)
- Since two of the key obstacles to success were competition and the lack of business, and given that the survey has found a concentration of start ups in a small number of sectors, it may be useful for eGY to examine whether they could contribute more to strategically matching new business start up to market need. (see Sections 1, 5)
- To commission external evaluations on an ongoing basis to identify where outcomes and outputs are delivered against national indicators, to identify gaps and to assist in the planning of forward strategies.

APPENDIX A: WHY eGY SUPPORT IMPACTED POSITIVELY OR NOT ON BUSINESS

l) When asked “Has/did the support that you’ve had from eGY had a positive impact on your business?” 66 respondents (69%) said ‘Yes’. They were then asked “Why do you say that?”

General support

“Without it I would have given up a long time ago!”

“I wouldn’t know how to start up the business without eGY”

“100%! It had a positive impact in all ways. Invaluable information, advice and support. I wouldn’t have been able to start without the grant.”

“Without eGY I would not have started up”

“It gave me a foundation and direction”

“[It gave me] business awareness, positive outlook”

“It was helpful. I plastered the EnterpriseGY building so gained work directly”

“I think without them I would have made some blunders. Several factors I did not know about were avoided because of information I received”

“The business would not have run or got off its feet without eGY”

“eGY gave a high standard to me so I was able to start myself. I would not have been doing so well without them. I would not have been successful so quickly either”

“There’s a few reasons: the initial support was good, the grant was needed. The Ongoing meetings have been really good. I have needed after care - there was a lot of support”

“With lack of income eGY helped me very much”

“They were very helpful because I would not have known about all that is involved in starting up on your own”

“I couldn’t have started up without [the support from eGY]. I got a bursary and ongoing advice throughout the year. I’m still getting bits and pieces through and the newsletter which is good. It’s got a lot in it”

“Because they told us what to expect. How to run a business, how to be successful. Good advice”

Confidence building

“It gave me confidence. People were likeminded and drove me to go for it and set up”

“I would not have known where to start. Although no longer trading I was taught well and with their help was able to give it a go”

“[It gave me the] confidence that I can do it and knowing someone is there to help if anything crops up that I need advice on”

“eGY took all my worries away as they advised me what to do. They made the way wide open”

“They convinced me to keep going, that I was doing everything right”

“They motivated me and helped me with legal side of business – gave a lot of contacts”

“My picture was on eGY windows for about two years - that got me known. Lots of contacts came from eGY. They helped me personally to become confident.”

“Positive ideas. They gave me a confidence boost every time I went”

“They gave me the courage to go for it. Good confidence building”

Financial support

“The grant enabled me to expand the structure and create more jobs”

“It was all good. I would not have been able to get my equipment without the grant. Without equipment there would have been no business. I gained much knowledge through the business course. I got everything I needed”

“Because of the grant and also because eGY introduced free craft fairs I was able to get known there”

“It gave me investment and advice”

“ Definitely [made a difference]. I bought tools for business to get started”

“I had to pay for exams etc. With eGY they got me the money to do this”

“[Because of the] grant I got the tools I needed. It would have taken a lot longer to get going without it.

“Because of help I received, I knew what I had to do. The funding helped to get us going. Other business were informed of what we were doing and that has helped a lot”

Valuable business advice

“They were brilliant. They answered any questions clearly. They were constructively critical which helped. They had time for me then and now with aftercare by phone or email. I would not have been able to start up if I had not had a loan”.

“The last seminar some information we did not use because we felt that we did not want to go the way that they said but the other information we did use and felt that it was good”

“It made a few things realistic. They were informative about marketing”

“I did start over the years to go to exhibitions and talk with artists but my ideas wouldn't get off the ground until I started looking at eGY and there I got a breakthrough. Other than eGY there was 'no go'”.

“The ideas they gave me helped. It all went down to lack of money”

“They helped me with advertising. The courses helped me so I knew what I was doing”

“The advice given was really good – legal advice. Opportunities were given so that I got known. Funding was good. I got two lots of £1000 to help me with a business plan and equipment”

“I am a qualified accountant but eGY gave me direction and feedback. They emailed templates to me for a business plan”

“They taught me all sides of business- practical, legal and book keeping” (fire/security systems)

“The Marketing and advertising [helped]”

“The courses held were all relevant. The PR was excellent. The Marketing course gave me ideas to get going”

“I'm no good on computers, so I got that help. I sort of got my NVQ which I needed. The research which I needed was completed with the help given”

“Good advice and support”

“The information allowed me to do the things that are needed in my business”

“We had some skills about starting businesses but not all. Sally helped with all that we did not know and it helped us to get started”

Any queries that I had there was always someone at hand. Advice given was for things I did not know”

“They gave more information than what I knew. They show you where you’re going in terms of business”

“It taught me stuff to look out for in the future like how to do my books better. I was in a muddle at the beginning. The course taught me how to do my books better”

On going encouragement and support

“I would not have managed without the mentoring/courses etc.”

“They gave me encouragement with mentoring”

“We talked about all sorts of things. It was the guidance in different areas which helped me start up”

“I just needed them to check things in which I had already prepared”

“The Start up was helpful”

“We would not have done this by ourselves because we really didn’t know how to go about things. eGY encouraged us all the way”

“All information was made available. I was reassured that my business would work out. They were positive and interested in my ideas. Also I’ve had two after care calls to ask if everything was alright”

“I feel that even in years to come even if there’s anything related to my business they will contact me to let me know”

“The support was good. Without them I would not have known where to start concerning tax and other legal things”

“When I asked for help, advice and support, I was always listened to and I applied all advice given and that’s how I was able to start my own business”

“Without their motivation I would not have started my own business”

“They got me going. They encouraged me to go for it”

II) When asked “Has/did the support that you’ve had from eGY had a positive impact on your business?” 18 respondents (19%) said ‘No’. They were then asked “Why do you say that?”

Funding

“They could not help with funding”

“Because they could not help. The government cannot be seen to give to any religion. I did want a grant to help but was not accepted”

“No one would have been able to encourage me. It was a kick for me to know that I had to do this on my own as there was no other help available like funding. The loans had a very high interest rate”

“The grant was refused. That was what I needed”

Customer service

“No help at all given. No advice except to go to the Jobcentre”

“There was no advice or support given at all. They did not want to know at all”

“eGY refused to give me any help at all. I was not after any funding but courses and advice on starting a business up. I was told that they could not help with what I wanted to do. I was alarmed because they were so blunt”

“I had short term help and then nothing afterwards. Even though I made contact for more training no one ever got back to me”

General

“Because of what I already knew it did not really have any impact on my business. Although there was some new information which I appreciated”

“The business would have carried on if it had a positive effect”

APPENDIX B

Respondents were asked why EGY services had been beneficial to them and gave the following comments:

General

"It all has been beneficial. I had a grant to start me off, training to help me know how to get started, aftercare e.g. exhibitions for advertising. I have a contact number (mentor) for anything that may arise for now and future. I have used this in the past for advice and know that I can in the future"

"I had no knowledge of business set up and eGY taught me all I know. You could talk to them about anything"

"It helped me to be prepared and not make expensive mistakes"

"Every service was vital because coming from South Africa everything was different here. The regulations are much stricter in the UK."

"It put everything into some sort of order for me"

"Gave information on every aspect of business which I would not have known before"

"I didn't know where else to go to get the information that I needed. eGY are free. I would not have been able to go to other places because they are too expensive"

"All aspects were crucial - the grant for tools and all courses and mentoring. I would not have been able to do this without it."

"All the services were good. The help and advice were excellent. It really helped with lots of advice to help me start up"

"I talked about what I wanted to do one to one, this was good. I was offered courses and even premises were mentioned but I did not take up these offers"

"I already knew what I had to do but the meetings were helpful to go over and check everything"

eGY provided valuable business advice and training

"I was taught how to run a business, about books and things I would not have know about"

"It helped with book keeping and marketing. I wouldn't have known these things otherwise"

"I knew nothing about starting a business. I was taught about all aspects of business on the course - about accounts etc. Also the course built my confidence up"

"The course gave background into taxation, planning, and marketing"

"It confirmed my business plan"

"I didn't have a clue how to start up a business like sorting out the tax and all that. It was really helpful. They told you everything you needed to know so you didn't make a mistake"

"It was all useful, teaching everything about business areas"

"It helped with marketing"

"I would not have known what to do without the courses!"

“The advice was excellent. They couldn’t help financially though”

“It covered practically everything you need to know at the beginning. It took me through all the points that you needed to be aware of starting up a business like keeping the books. It was definitely helpful”

“It made me sure of what I had to do”

“These things have got me contacts, and advertised more”

“Good advice about starting up, encouraging”

“Good advice/help”

“I ran a business before but with the advice/services I had success this time”

“I had guidance/support in setting up”

“It gave me progression information, it was helpful advice”

“The courses were informative and there were helpful one to one meetings”

“Insight into what I had to do instead of wallowing in the dark – informative” (fire/security systems)

“Told me all information on tax issues, what it meant to be a sole trader. I did not know this information before eGY”

“I was in the dark about business so I took advice and now I have a website. I know what to do to start my business up now”

“It gave me information which I would not have got anywhere else”

“They gave me the information I needed”

“It allowed me to launch my own website”

“I needed help and advice to get started and eGY provided all of that”

“I found the courses to be relevant and useful to start my own business up. The net work meeting was positive. The information was really good”

eGY provided helpful mentoring

“The Business mentoring support was invaluable”

“The mentoring was excellent, the advice very useful”

“The business mentor was honest, creative and enthusiastic”

“Sally was my mentor, she was very helpful. She always had answers to my questions. She always knew exactly what had to be done with sound advice and helped me out a lot”

“The ongoing meetings have been very good. If problems arise or for whatever reason I can arrange to meet with Sally and she helps me by telling me how to go about things”

“I only had mentoring. Very helpful information was given. It helped me to be confident because I knew what I had to do. Advice was always available on anything”

“Although I only had one meeting I was told everything that I needed to know”

“I had mentoring which was really good to help me see the realities of starting my business and getting my invention known and made.”

“It was very personal to me. The person running it was very open. It was very good and helpful”

eGY provided key funding

“I could buy tools that were needed” (clothes repair)

“It was all helpful. The grant got me equipment that I needed”

“The grant was priceless. It helped me a lot”

“The £15000 grant got my materials in which I still use. I would not have been able to start without them. I bought downgraded tools so that I could get all tools that I needed”

“The funding helped us get up and the ongoing support has been good. If I ever need advice I can phone and there is someone to help”

“Some tools I would not be able to buy but with a grant I could”

“I got equipment I needed and I would not have been able to have a business if I didn't have my tools”

“It was all positive really. The funding definitely helped. I'm grateful for all the advice. Everything was very structured which helped me get a structure for my own business”

“Some tools I would not have been able to buy but with the grant I could”

“I needed the grant for equipment and would not have been able to go forward at all without the grant”

eGY provided motivation and encouragement

“They gave me ideas of what to do. They told me what I had to do in the legal side of things and encouraged me to keep going”

“It brought me out of myself. It helped my confidence. It helped me to know what steps to take”

“It made me think about all areas of business. It got me moving into my own business”

“Sally, she was fantastic. Two years it took to be a driving teacher. I could have given up on several occasions but Sally kept me going with regular meetings and lots of encouragement”

“As a sole trader it can get lonely so it was great. If I had any query they would put me straight and point me in the right direction”

“It gave me confidence and showed me where to go in business”

“We received information that we didn't know about. We were shown things that we had to achieve. It was supportive to know that they were there if we needed them for anything. It gave us the confidence to go for it after ironing all the problems out”

Negative and ambiguous comments:

“I cannot remember much about it just that I met once with a person. I do not think there was much input at all”

“It was only a little helpful. I already knew some information”

“I found that although all the people were very nice the course that I was on was very basic. I am not snobby but I was already ahead of business starting and personally needed more advice on the potential for growth which there was no course or support for. I only attended two days instead of the full course. What I did need was unavailable to me”

“When we went to eGY as recommended, the person we saw said straight away that there was ‘no funding to be had’. We had not asked for anything like that and only wanted some advice which we did not get either”

“Some of the half day courses I did were not beneficial because I already had that information. I had to go and attend so that I could get the bursary”

“The book keeping was sort of useful but not up to scratch. I actually binned it after having a long look at it”

APPENDIX C

Would you recommend eGY to other people?

77 respondents (87%) said Yes and when asked 'Why?' gave the following reasons:

Because eGY provides a valuable service to people wanting to start a business

"Brilliant. I have recommended others to use eGY and they are now in their own businesses"

"I think that eGY reinforces people's dreams – it keeps them alive and they encourage people to go for it while giving people a structure. People in Great Yarmouth need a place like this to advise them and encourage people to have their own businesses.

"Excellent training. They do not get side tracked – very useful information and new knowledge which people need to know"

"I see other people start up and I see them struggle and rather than me offer advice I send them to eGY or tell them to contact them"

"Because people starting businesses need a framework – something to underpin them and to help them think laterally about things that they may face, things that might be important but get lost in the stresses of everyday working practice"

"People sometimes do not know where to start and they are very informative"

"Really helpful to anyone who is considering business for themselves"

"They helped. I always recommend other people to consult them."

"Very pleased with all they offered"

"Provide positive help, sensible understandable advice. Provided grant (which was helpful in starting up)"

"Good at what they do/services they offer"

"If people were starting new businesses I would recommend eGY"

"People don't understand about what it involves to start business up – eGY shows you what you have to do"

"People who don't know about business start up would need eGY for advice and support"

"Because they helped me positively I would tell others to go there if they were thinking of starting up a business for themselves"

"It is an invaluable service to Great Yarmouth and to those that are looking to start up. It's a helping hand to those who need all the information to start up. It helps to be recognised by others about your chosen business. From little acorns grow great oaks"

"Yes. eGY offers an introduction to business. Your ideas are looked at and then all types of support follows from courses, research to grants"

"Good environment to study in, friendly and helpful"

"Although I was isolated because of my profession I would still recommend eGY because I have known other people to get help in the form of courses and even funding. eGY is needed for people who need to know how to start a business"

"It is very informative, helpful, motivating"

"They were so good to me and helpful. I wouldn't be self employed without it"

“I have always [recommended eGY] because they are very good. I’m always meeting people who want to start businesses up”

Because eGY are specialists and professional

“Because eGY is helpful. They know what they are talking about. It is the first port of call to go to if you are considering your own business. They do do a lot.

“The [eGY] services are essential to the success of businesses”

“I have already learnt everything on how to be self employed through eGY and do encourage others to go for it too. eGY are professional, they take you through every step. I learnt everything through them”

“eGY have got a lot to offer - mentoring, all types of information that you need about starting a business, lots of training, courses, all practical things. Also grants and they are very professional. I did recommend two friends to go there and they both are in successful businesses now”

“They help, give advice and support people. Professional advisors and advice given. I’ve done really well with all that they offered”

“They answered lots of questions and they were experienced

“Because they are very good and helpful. They know what they are talking about”

Because eGY offer good quality advice, information and guidance

“Starting up business is a new thing and there is a lot of help, advice and information that you need to know and eGY is the place to go to get it”

“Have done with a few people – useful starting point. Initial start up advice and knowledge very good. Free courses are good. People were very approachable. I was taught bookkeeping”

“Everything you need to start a business, how to deal with tax websites. You may not be able to do the tax side of business so invaluable advice”

“Good frame work for people who want to start out on their own in business”

“ People need the guidance and encouragement to try their own ideas of business. eGY present their information simply. They get you over the first hurdles of business. Instead of stumbling blindly they show you the legal side which has been very helpful”

“eGY give reassurance to anyone looking into their own business. They take away any worries because of good advice. If they do not have answers to any questions they will send you elsewhere to get advice”

“Because of the information they gave me. It was very useful”

“eGY are interesting, informative and if people would consider starting their own business this is the place to go for good direction”

“If you are wanting your own business you can receive lots of information you will be needing”

“Good guidance for all areas of starting business. Clarity on every subject so you know what to expect. Policies and procedures explained very clearly”

“They will help you to sort out details of running a business”

“Nobody knows how to start a business up and eGY gives good advice. It’s good to start here”

"I have already [recommended eGY] because I think that eGY is very good with the advice that they have to get you up and running in business"

"They are good at helping you to be knowledgeable about angles of business and how to get trading"

"The advice is good – they can help. They gave new ideas to you. Promotion has been good"

"Good place to start to set up your own business. Good advice"

Because eGY offer a helpful, constructive approach and support

"Yes, they are very helpful. All good. Have helped a lot, brilliant"

"Good for starting out and good advice to encourage others in business"

"Very helpful/knowledge"

"They were so helpful to me. They could help so many other people"

"I have to several people already. A couple went to eGY and ended up with their own businesses. They give good support and advice"

"It's good to talk about your ideas with someone to get the right direction you need to keep going in. Points you towards what you need to get prepared for. It's like therapy to talk things over first"

"Really helpful. Have sent others to eGY. Impressed"

"Because they are helpful in all ways and are free. They are welcoming and stop you worrying"

"Yes because eGY were very good and knowledgeable and as they helped me I would encourage others to go there for all advice and support"

"I have [recommended eGY] already because I think that it is very good support. They care for you there. It is good for others especially as there is a great number of redundancies. Some of these people may want to consider going in to their own businesses with their redundancy pay. They make you think about things"

"They helped me a lot, therefore I know they can help others in the same way"

"Definitely. You can ask about anything and if they didn't know the answer they would find out for you. Lots of courses to help other people and lots of direction"

"My own experience has been really good, especially the ongoing support. I have recommended others to go already. Nothing was too much for all the people who were supporting me"

"I done alright with the support I had and think that other people would as well. They are good"

"There is so much to know and they are very positive people there. People thinking of [setting up in] business would find help and support. It's right in the town and is needed because we are a deprived area"

"The mentoring was very helpful"

Because eGY offer useful training

"Yes I have recommended people to go to eGY because I think that they are very good especially the business courses. You then see what is involved to start up"

“Because to start up your own business is hard. The financial help and training is helpful”

“The courses were good. The after care was not good, there was no contact about the business plan. But this is needed in Great Yarmouth”

“Can help with courses but not a lot else. If you didn’t have a clue about business involvement the courses would help you know more information on how to start”

“Yes I have recommended people to go to eGY because I think that they are very good especially the business courses. You then see what is involved to start up”

“Definitely [would recommend]. The seminars were excellent, we were told how to promote business. It was invaluable. I will be phoning again for more advice”

“Beginners need this support to know what to do to start business and the courses are good”

General comments

“Although I was not given any help or advice I do know of people who have. So I would tell others to go there if they were considering their own businesses. I would not bad mouth them”

“I would recommend [eGY] to other sectors who might have more time to devote to the services offered”

“It depends what type of business and person as it would not suit all businesses”

“They could not provide help to my business but may be helpful to others”

“I already have [recommended eGY]”

“The help is there for others”

“I cannot [recommend them] because I do not know what eGY offers as I only had one brief meeting with one person. [But] they were good”

ii) Would you recommend eGY to other people?

7 respondents (8%) said No and when asked ‘Why?’ gave the following reasons:

“Because there was no time given for me to have advice or support. No help available”

“I’ve told people not to go to eGY but to the Shaw Trust which is next door to eGY”

“I found the person that I enquired from very unprofessional. I know that it was only one particular person but I came away feeling I had wasted my time. They were unhelpful”

“I found eGY unhelpful”

“The lady that I saw wasted my time. She built my hopes up then hit me within two minutes that I would not receive any help at all”

“I cannot relay to anyone that it was helpful. It should have helped everyone, not just those considering a good idea to have a business. People who have an initiative to grow should have had support. I had no one and was very disappointed with what was not offered but I will say again that the people that ran the course at eGY were very good and nice”

APPENDIX D

What would you say are the main obstacles to the success of your business?

Multiple obstacles

“Advertising – it is expensive. Better area and premises to work in. Getting known, the recession”

“Recession, advertising, lack of money, more orders needed, supplies gone up in prices, everything going up”

Getting work in. Advertising is expensive.

“Finance, marketing, advertising”

“Competition. People undercut each other. Getting customers, advertising too expensive”

“Money, advertising, promotion”

“Not enough clients yet. Advertising needed (expensive). An office to work from.”

“Credit crunch is a threat. Keeping positive and making sure I am up to date with business”

“Recession, finance, how to deal with awkward customers”

“Recession, exposure, advertising and premises”

“Income is low. Advertising is too expensive. Slower process without advertising. Lack of funds for advertising”

Recession, causing lack of spending/lack of finance

“Recession”

“Recession. My business is mobile but is not a necessity to people. The recession is hitting people’s pockets”

“People are not doing so much as they used to (parties etc.) because of cut backs”

“Economic depression”

“No money in the town, recession. Need a website”

“Finding work, recession”

“Recession. We provide a service which for a lot of people if not essential”

“Credit crunch. People are watching what they are spending and probably parents are not paying for their children’s driving lessons like they used to be able to”

“Finance because of credit crunch”

“A lot of people struggle to get money as the banks aren’t lending. A lot of people are confused about getting a decent loan. A course on that would be fantastic”

Financing and cash flow

“Cash flow”

“I think money”

“Lack of funds”

“Complete lack of funding”

“Zero profit to invest in the continuation of complex web design.

“No money being spent. Buying new stock is expensive and I need to keep up with bills for everything which is very expensive”

“Payment from customers”

“Payment to a degree, credit card service companies”

“Payment from customers”

Advertising and marketing

“Getting customers, getting known by others”

“Advertising hasn’t worked. More students needed. Word of mouth has been best”

“Contacts. Being able to display work. Getting my original work printed. Costly but people want prints more than an original. Having to sell in London and not locally”
“Advertising and awareness of business”
“Getting known. At the moment it is by word of mouth. Advertising is expensive. I work from a car with no advertising as I cannot afford it. Money is not coming in at the moment”
“Getting work, advertising”
“To become known to key buyers and to get appointments with buyers. Launching my product”
“ advertising is expensive”
“More clients; advertising is expensive”
“The general public are not understanding what my business is all about. They need to know that HIP is no longer there and my profession has been put into its place. When you sell a home you have to have this survey done and that’s what I do”
“Advertising, keeping my name out there”
“Marketing, promotion, advertising”

Competition and lack of business

“Getting new clients, advertising is very expensive”
“Google input, everyone is in competition”
“Scaffolding businesses are established so there is high competition. It’s almost impossible to access contracts in Great Yarmouth. It’s easier further afield”
“Competition from other providers”
“Finance, lots of competition. Self employment is increasing. [People are] cutting each other down with prices and VAT”
“Competition with others doing the same. The Norfolk area is hard to sell products in mainly because of my costs”
“Competition. A lot of people are doing the same job. With VAT going up people are cutting down as they haven’t got the money. At the end of the day window cleaning and gardening are proxy jobs. A lot of people are doing it illegally and doing it cheaper”
“Economic climate, it’s cheaper in Far East”
“Competition”
“Being a female, competition with men’s businesses”

Premises

“Money to get premises. It is very expensive to start up in premises”
“I am not trading from Precasters but have to pay expensive rent and business rates”
“Premises will be needed as at the moment I work from home”

Other

“Health issues”
“Need growth”
“Managing the workload as a sole trader”
“Sourcing produce/services”
“Finding out more about importing goods for me to sell”
“As long as I am healthy I cannot at the moment see any obstacles. Economy does affect people but business is busy at the moment”

APPENDIX E

What are the key areas of business support your business will need over the next year?

Advertising/marketing

“Advertising”

“Advertising, needing to have new treatments in which could mean new training”

“Advertising”

“Marketing/advertising. Promotion of small businesses”

“Government financial help, advertising”

“Advertising”

“Advertising”

“Promotion, help with getting originals printed. Opening up opportunities because at the moment they are limited”

“Help, advice, funding for advertising. Anything so that I will be made know for my business. Then I think it will expand with this type of nurture”

“Finance to help with advertising or information on ways of inexpensive advertising”

“Help with advertising to reach the market, am on internet – eBay, Gumtree”

“Advertisement”

“Marketing, advertising, general support if needed”

“Advertising, book work advice”

“Advice about money, advertising and promotion

“Exposure of business, word of mouth, advertising”

“Business advertising to get new clients”

“Advertising”

Business growth and restructure

“Help restructuring the business”

“Help to expand the business - make into a Ltd company”

“Advice re. possible franchise and ways to build it even bigger”

“We are doing ok at present. We did try to employ someone but it did not work out. We would have liked to expand. At the moment we are working at a level we are happy with. We get known by word of mouth”

“Advice for the next stage of moving to grow my business and hopefully to be able to employ staff”

“Investment to expand quickly”

“Trade shows etc can be expensive so maybe finance to get business growing.

Guidance with things that may crop up in the future. After care”

“We do everything ourselves but would like a course on getting new customers”

“Growth is needed. Need to know ways of doing this. We would like to employ people as well”

Business skills training

“Courses about paperwork, book keeping etc

“Making people aware that my business is an essential matter. Training for the future”

“Learning courses to do with online trading”

“Help with book keeping”

“To check books”

Business support and advice

“Ongoing support with mentor, keeping up to date with the industry”

"Finding suppliers (I'm thinking of selling watches in the future)"

"No not at the moment, I can ring if anything arises, I can ring Sally who is my mentor for any advice I may need anytime, any-day"

"None except information later about employing someone. Self sufficient at the moment. Extra staff information needed"

Funding/financing

"Funding, premises"

"Funding"

"I'm trying to expand to do lessons so I need funding or help to know where I can get funding from. Marketing, advertising"

Premises

"Cheaper premises and bills"

"Suitable storage premises with low rent and low business rates"

"High rents in this area. Premises needed with lower rents"

Other

"Sorting out independently"

"On recovery I will access everything that is on offer"

"Advertising is free (am on Facebook). Sally has already helped me with getting advertised on Facebook which is free"

"Business is growing at the moment"

"At the end of the day it's down to whether people need you. Will need help with costs of buying a new van and petrol. Main issue is money. No support needed from eGY"

APPENDIX F

Like many organisations, eGY may need to reduce the services it offers because of budget cuts. What do you think is the most important area for eGY to focus on in terms of business support for the future?

Continue providing all current services

"[eGY] needs to be available to remind people that their dreams can become a reality. Training and funding and also after care. Need to inspire people to try...even if they fail. eGY needs to stay to give people a chance"

"Support in all things. Money to help start up, advertising"

"To keep eGY open because it is a good drop in centre to find things out. Maintain one to one mentoring essential for Great Yarmouth"

"eGY is almost perfect I would say because of the advice, training and especially because of loans"

"I think eGY should not be forced to make any cuts at all as it is all valuable help. Everything is explained. The Government wants people to go into small businesses so they should still encourage this through the enterprise. I give eGY 10/10. They should not change. Have no budget cuts with them"

"Carry on as they are. They are doing a good job. They know what they are doing"

"Doing a great job already, carry on doing what you're doing"

"It's all important information. You need all aspects, training etc."

"Anything – help is needed for small businesses"

"All things. Everything is very good"

"The whole package is important. Couldn't start to unravel what provides better outcomes, it's a service"

"They should not cut [eGY]. Without this a lot of people starting businesses would possibly fail because they would not know all the aspects of running a successful business. Start up courses and mentoring"

General

"Staff that are helpful. I know of other people that feel the same and in all honesty I think that it may just be the one particular person that was unhelpful. Courses to do with legal things, book keeping etc"

"To accept peoples ideas of what they want to do and look into helping them. We were told that there was 'Boots' and other people doing ladies accessories so was it a good idea for us to do it?"

"It is a mine field out there to start your own business and I think eGY should continue to focus on all the relevant information so people know what they are doing. Advertising and training"

"To give realistic feedback. To offer training in business and marketing help, investment, product development, - the whole packet"

"Giving people a chance"

"Continue to support businesses that have already started so they do not fold but help keep them going. Ongoing networking"

"The Start up is brilliant – it has a bit of all areas of starting a business. Funding is very valuable, on going support as or if problems arise.

"To give support, grants etc to those that have initiative to start and grow in business. Research of how successful people and business could be and give full support there and after care. Look to see positive potential for growth"

"People need to be able to tap into help right at the point of need as often they can't afford the time to go back"

“Get people to know that you are there. Business support, advertise so people can be encouraged”

“Keep the free breakfasts. It made a lot of people come that wouldn’t have come to the course otherwise”

Mentoring and ongoing support

“One to one mentors”

“First 6 months contact, aftercare. Someone to understand if difficulties arise”

“Mentoring, business support, courses and grants”

“Mentoring, ongoing training”

“Guidance, knowledge, support”

“People starting out to be supported but also those who have just started by themselves should be able to also get advice, training and support from eGY. If problems arise it would be good to be able to go to eGY for advice or just to know further steps to take in business”

“One to one mentoring is more useful than groups because it is more personal”

“One to one support and after care”

“Mentors. I think that Sally my mentor could have almost done this work single-handedly as she is the one that I learnt most from and she was so encouraging in all ways”

“Business mentoring”

Courses

“The start up course”

“Definitely the start up course and to stay as personal as they can”

“Start up course”

“Start up course”

“Learning side of business, the start up courses. Ongoing help if problems arise and people need advice”

“Basic advice on starting up. Legal and tax advice. Simplifying all aspects of books. Start up units”

“Need all the information to start up a business, vital for people in this position”

“Courses and personal advisors”

“To keep giving advice instead of courses that need to be done anyway”

“Help in starting up your own business with courses and information”

“To focus on confidence skills and start up courses”

“The start up courses”

“Virtual learning environments, licensed access to all necessary tutorials online so I can revisit training away from the office environment”

“Skills for confidence building, personal skills training and start up courses”

“Start up courses, legal advice, Books and funding”

“Start up courses”

“Start up courses”

“Start up course, mentors for questions needing to be answered”

Loans, Grants and funding

“Good funding to put their services out to people and backing for business”

“Informative services to start up businesses. Grants. Grants are really helpful but I think that you have to be careful that the people receiving them are genuine people”

“I think grants as without them some people cannot go forward. The information can be given out in the form of leaflets and courses on computer or writing sent out but it is

harder to get a grant. We would not have been able to start without it. The grant gave us a foot in the door.

“Loan system and advice”

“Grants and courses”

“Funding”

“Finance”

Help with premises

“Low rental premises”

“Reduced rents for starting up. Help with start up costs. Not to be small minded about what ideas are out there Look at previous history of claimants who want funding for business”

Business advice

“Key employment advice, courses – skills and legal”

“Ongoing support and advice and networking events”

“Focus on their advisors”

“Accepting all business proposals. To give all people and ideas a chance with advice and training on books etc.”

“Networking”

“Research into the help given to some who will not be successful in the future. Aftercare so that those in business will have help to keep going, advice etc.

“Advertising”

“To see how much of the same business is in the same area. With some there is just too much competition in the town e.g. photographers. Is there enough work for 10 or 30?”

“The legal side of business”

“Explain about what businesses are all about. Advice and courses”

“The business courses and other support is needed. A number you can ring if you need advice on any issues which may turn up”

“A years after care if or when people get into business. If people get stuck a little it is nice to know that there is someone you can phone for professional advice and support”

Suggestions on how eGY can cut costs

“Focus on people who have got the ability to be successful. Cut out teas and coffees and all the other treats and things that are not really needed. Watch for what is really needed to reduce wasting money”

“5 people attended the course, 2 of which were part of eGY. The food was good but far too much and it was wasted. We could have brought a packed lunch in ourselves”

“Money to be used wisely. With many enterprises, money is being wasted on their own buildings, salaries and LUNCHES. My husband being a caterer at the time was providing many buffets for courses and day meetings, there was often far more than needed. One time there was enough food for many people and only 3 turned up – food was wasted. Another buffet had mistakenly been ordered twice”

“I think that cuts could be made by stopping the ‘breakfast meetings’ and ‘evening meetings’. They were sometimes good and informative yet some were not useful at all, had not direction, no purpose, no structure, no pointers, not valuable at all. Just gave us someone to chat with. The food was very good but I think that a lot of money had been spent on this and it was unnecessary. When you start a business, you do approximately 60 hours a week and the meetings were hard to find time to go to because of research

and paperwork so when we did, we wanted informative and more structured meetings than what was presented. They didn't always serve a great purpose."

APPENDIX G

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

POSITIVE COMMENTS

(negative comments contained within an overall positive view or vice versa are highlighted in pink)

"Very experienced people there. Good starting point. eGY made people enthusiastic. My business failed and then I got offered full time work. It was good because the courses were free and all advice"

"I think that the premises are situated in a very good place. It used to be on the outskirts of the town centre and people did not know that it was there. Now it is making people more aware of starting businesses for themselves. eGY seems to focus on 'start up' for businesses and not aftercare. The free events have been mainly good, some not so good. Network events are good and of course the breakfasts"

"eGY very positive, great assistance and helpful"

"Businesses need help starting up, all services needed"

"The service is really good. Nothing bad to say at all. This is a service which is needed in Great Yarmouth and hopefully it will stay. It's aftercare is also very good"

"I can only be positive about eGY. They help you live your dream"

"I consider I have been very lucky to have had Enterprise GY's help to get Classic Massage off the ground and to be such a successful business"

"I think eGY is a necessity to our area and surrounding areas. I was helped through eGY from being a student to a professional artist. I had no idea of what business involved. eGY took my idea, encouraged me, gave me all practical guidance which was free. I would not have been able to get all of these qualities from anywhere else unless I had a lot of money to pay which I did not have. So there was no other alternative, I had not money for that sort of advice. eGY really encouraged me to move out of my comfort zone and go for it. They taught me also how to set up a copyright which was very important, marketing, networking, contacts. They helped me with budgeting. We looked into costs. I know now all things from a business point of view and I am doing well. I will be getting a new business and name from what I started from"

"If they close or have cuts I think it will be a big loss to Yarmouth and the surrounding areas. This does keep off some of the unemployed"

"It is important to ensure that the service does not get cut in the streamlining of services for efficiencies. The Government wants to get people to work/start up businesses and therefore funding must continue"

"It's really important that the council and others recognise the role that eGY plays in providing services that help people aspire to realising their potential"

"They did everything they could have done for me. It was down to myself that the business failed"

“They’ve become like a bunch of friends to me. I’ve met so many new people. The support has been fantastic. They’ve been so helpful and the overall support has been great. The next thing is getting our name out there. The networking breakfasts have been so helpful to meet other people in the same situations. I would never have dreamt of doing some of the things I’ve done but eGY has kick-started me into it quicker than I would have done anything myself. I would be so devastated if it all ended. I can’t give them anything but praise”

“The government encourages the public to have small businesses so I think that they should continue to support and keep eGY. There is a great need and people’s ideas should be looked at. People don’t know what running your business involves and eGY gives them that information on all levels, confidence skills and the legal side of things. It would be a big let down if it closed and a huge hit for the town and for the local people. There is a need here”

“I am getting recognition slowly. I am grateful for eGY. If I need any other courses or help eGY emails me every so often. I would be unemployed if it hadn’t have been for eGY”

“Very satisfied with eGY. Will be a tragedy if Great Yarmouth lose it”

“I would be disappointed if eGY closed. They are a help for the future as they are very informative. They are getting recognised and I think encourage people to consider their own possibility of having their own business”

“eGY has been a great assistance. Excellent guidance. My invention has taken a long time to get this far into sales but I am definitely getting therewith the help of eGY. They have been excellent with helping with marketing which was one of the most important aspects. I progressed with their help. I became very ill with breast cancer but have recovered and have not given upon my dream and eGY have always been there even now with support and advice. They are very professional and I do still have further assistance from them. When I started I was visiting one day a week every month for a year. They are a valuable asset to Great Yarmouth and other areas and I think that they should definitely stay and carry on with what they are doing. Through them I have 200 people interested in my product from Amazon and 20th Century Fox”

“I had excellent support from eGY. If it had not been for them I would never have got started. I wouldn’t have done it without them”

“I only went to eGY once. I met a lady manager and she was enthusiastic, positive, honest and good. I then had to see a younger lady to talk about the help and advice I needed. I was told by her that I should have done some market research. I was not impressed with her attitude. She gave me one contact in which I did but I did not get any response at all. Eventually I used ‘Business Link Great Yarmouth’ in which I did some courses and I am on websites and networks. I would have really preferred to use eGY though and feel that it would be a disaster if it is closed because Great Yarmouth needs this outlet. It does have a place in Great Yarmouth”

“I would like to say how efficient and good Sally has been. If I need any help at all I can email her and straight away she gets back in contact with me”

"I learnt a lot about research, there were many issues to explore. I do have City Guilds in the electrical field as well so this knowledge gave me everything I needed to know. I have a website still running. My brother helped me as he is a designer. I'm now developing new skills as I am training to be a nurse. Because of the recession it would be beneficial for Great Yarmouth for eGY to stay"

"I learnt a lot of information from eGY. Legal things of business, practical advice. The courses were very good as I started from scratch. They showed me how to go about things with lots of advice. I found this very helpful"

"Brilliant service. Really pleased with them. High standard all round, keep going. One complaint only, eGY are doing a 'Dragons Den'. I applied but no one got back to me at all. It is happening this week. Love the breakfasts, it's somewhere to meet with other small businesses and talk together"

"Been very valuable for myself. Hopefully eGY will not have many cut backs. It is needed in Great Yarmouth. Everything has been excellent, just one negative aspect was that overnight I had to pay 100% more for virtual office. I have been very happy with eGY"

"eGY is excellent. A shame to get rid of it, it is an asset to the town. The funding that I got helped me with all the tools that I needed-different equipment which I use"

"I couldn't get a car with the grant because of some rules, but it did get me some tools that I needed and would not be able to of got started without the grant"

"A good idea eGY, helped me a lot. In my profession there is a lot of others doing the same and people tend to stick with those that they already know. It would be good to get more customers"

"If eGY closes it will be scandalous. There are dedicated people there, it would be wrong to close. I couldn't have done this on my own. I also did health and safety courses that were very helpful. It was all brilliant as I started my business I was also allowed some financial help with Jobcentre. Without this I would not have been able to start. I could not have done this without all this help. The whole package all round is good, brilliant and helpful. The only thing that wasn't helpful was the network. It's also good to have continued support as problems arise in the future. After care good"

"eGY have helped me a great deal. I am dyslexic and did have some learning difficulties. They helped me to be structured, reinforced my plans, helped me to be confident. They enforced my passion because they were inspirational themselves and the whole environment was inspirational. There were others in the groups that were like minded and this was encouraging. There was a tide of excitement with us because of the same attitude. They opened up a door in Yarmouth for us which is good because it is near and we could just drop in or phone. There was regular training. We received certificates, we learnt as we were actually doing hands on training. It was all very realistic. Location is a local stream, exceptionally good next door to the job centre. Stephen and Sally that I saw were never sidetracked. They gave all relevant and new knowledge. Were very open with no barriers and with their support I have my own business running which I love doing and it is successful!"

“The free promotion has been very good e.g. craft fairs”

“Would like a grant, advertising is expensive. If I need any help I know I can always phone which is good. I will need to get word of mouth to get known. Invaluable to this unemployed area, I hope they don't close eGY because it is very good”

“eGY were brilliant. They make it ever so easy. They didn't use any big words. They made everything simple. Most of us were starting up but they made it basic and simple. I'm so satisfied with everything they've done. They gave me such good advice. I was really grateful to them”

“It is a good thing. Takes you forward in little steps. Good help, advice and courses. Definitely a good help”

“I couldn't get a car with the grant because of some rules but it did get me tools that I needed and would not be able to have got without the grant”

“Very helpful. I wouldn't have known where to start without eGY. I couldn't have done it without them. They were good, there was no more training or advice they could have given. They covered everything”

“I had no courses or funding. I did talk to eGY once and they were very helpful and supportive. We did not use any of their services. We do know others that have used eGY with good results”

NEGATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT eGY

“I was very disappointed with eGY. The business is still going”

Rejected for funding

“I had one meeting with eGY. I was told that I did not qualify for any financial help. They could not help me. I was offered some courses of training which I accepted yet nothing materialised so no training was done with eGY. There was no contact at all from them over this. I then did receive a letter from them explaining that they were 'over subscribed'. The time when I did go, the people I did deal with were very nice although they couldn't help. I started business myself”

“No funding was available when I went. It had run out but the food looked expensive and must have cost a lot. I think that eGY should not put food out then maybe there would have been funding for other important things”

“Someone was given £10000 of funding for a bed and breakfast from eGY. It is successful to a degree although they have only been trading a short time. They had already had 3 failed businesses. Because my business was to do with witch craft and all different types of religions, gifts etc. Apparently the government were not allowed to fund anything of this nature. My time was wasted. I was told to do a business plan after I had emailed eGY with my ideas of what I wanted to do. The business plan took me all weekend and when I presented it, within two minutes I was told that I would not receive any help, I was refused point blank. I was annoyed at this as with the email they had said that I could get help. They could have told me before I did the business plan. I eventually received good advice from a wholesaler. I have been successful until lately.”

I almost felt as if I was being punished for having initiative to want to grow when what I needed was a grant and it was refused. I was disappointed with eGY but did get other help from others. Without this other help and the refusal from eGY my business could have easily collapsed. My husband is the bread winner and I couldn't have continued if he had not been. I did ask for access to help but wasn't completely refused unless I had closed everything that I had been successful with and started again from the start with eGY. I did not comply to this but carried on without eGY"

Poor customer service

Respondent left business 2 ½ years ago. "Before Christmas a group of us asked eGY to come and help us all concerning websites for business. They did not come because of the snow. I was appalled. Since then there has been no contact from them at all. I think that they are useless at helping people set up their own businesses"

"eGY should be able to take other peoples ideas and not suppress those things that they do not understand. They need to listen to the media concerns. I never wanted or asked for funding only help with business advice – books etc. It was disappointing to be completely blanked, they turned their backs on me and this is quite wrong. Although I have an isolated profession it is a law abiding one now, People do need my surveying to buy or sell a house. I was concerned with their attitude"

Lack of follow up

"I only went to eGY once for a little while. I did talk to someone although I'm not sure what about. There was no follow up, just a few ideas. Myself, dad and bank have been my support from the beginning. I only make a small profit which is used to go straight back into my business"

"eGY did not provide a good service. I felt that it was as much use as a soggy sock. I was disappointed because I came away with no help except that details were taken and I was told that if a bridal fair came up I would be informed. Recently someone came to see me and told me she had been to a bridal fair in Great Yarmouth and there were no bridal gowns at all. I had not been invited and was unaware that the fair was on. I have had no contact at all. eGY are supposed to help. I am very disappointed with eGY. My business is going reasonably well thanks to my own determination to make it work by myself"

"Should help more and keep in contact. Was a waste of time"

"Disappointed with eGY. There was no after care although I contacted several times and no one got back to me. Also contacted Link and the same thing happened. I would have liked more training. Also the financial help was not very much"

Was not provided with required service

"I went to eGY with my ideas about my business. I spoke to a woman who then waffled on to me, said that they couldn't help me in any way. She did give me some paper work but it was not relevant to me at all. I then went on the internet and through information there went to the Shaw Trust which is next door to eGY. They were very good with all the help they gave me and I am into my first 6 months of business. The Shaw Trust said that if eGY could not have helped me then they should have directed me to them. They seemed disappointed and said that eGY had never done this even with people who they could not help. Maybe the Shaw Trust could have helped those they rejected. As I had

left eGY I felt that I had wasted my time completely and now I am glad that I didn't give up but continued for someone else to help and found The Shaw Trust who have been brilliant"

Respondent said that he went to eGY with his idea of a business which he wanted to pursue. He had no help at all from Enterprise GY but was told to go to the bank and draw up a business plan. He had no money either. They offered nothing at all. He did not have a business and now he is in full time work employed.

"I was very disappointed not to be able to use this service"