



Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign September 2016 Survey

We asked employers currently signed up to the **Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign** about their experiences. 124 businesses completed the survey.

The Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign encourages local businesses to pay all employees the Living Wage, currently £8.25 per hour. The campaign is led and managed by **Brighton Chamber**, with 300 businesses, social enterprises, charities and public sector organisations signed up.

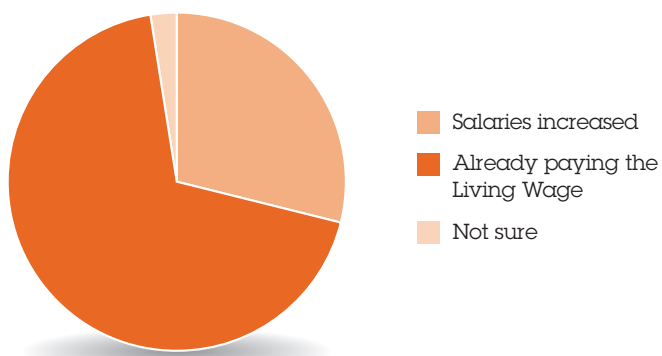
Living Wage employers (that filled in the survey) by sector:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|----|-------------------------|------------|
| Building & Construction | 9 | Legal | 2 | Solicitors | 0 |
| Care | 4 | Leisure | 2 | Sport, Leisure & Health | 1 |
| Cleaning | 1 | Media | 6 | Technology | 15 |
| Digital | 11 | Medical | 5 | Third Sector | 19 |
| Education | 4 | Public Sector | 1 | Tourism | 3 |
| Entertainment & Events | 4 | Real estate | 1 | Trade Unions | 0 |
| Financial inc. Wealth Management | 5 | Recruitment & Employment | 4 | Utilities | 1 |
| Hospitality & Catering | 5 | Retail | 16 | Other | 5 |
| | | | | TOTAL | 124 |

Salaries increased as a result of signing up to the Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign

29% of the businesses that responded to the survey increased wages as a direct result of signing up to the campaign. **68.5%** were already paying staff the Living Wage or more. **2.4%** weren't sure.

All of the businesses that filled in the survey are still paying all staff at least the current Living Wage rate of £8.25 per hour.



Using the Living Wage positively

Many of the businesses that responded to the survey use the Living Wage in a positive way, for instance to recruit new members of staff and to win new customers.

Some businesses commented that being a Living Wage employer is positive PR, and can be used to strengthen award entries or win tenders or funding.



"We believe paying the living wage is really important to staff morale and valuing the work of our employees."

Impact of paying the Living Wage...

...ON STAFF

70% of businesses described the impact of paying the Living Wage on their staff as very positive or fairly positive. **30%** said there was no impact.

Of the businesses that said that they didn't notice an impact, the majority commented they already paid the Living Wage or more, so they didn't notice a specific or measurable impact as a result of joining the campaign.



...ON BUSINESS

60% described the impact of being a Living Wage employer on their business as positive.



They went on to say they noticed the following effects:

- **56%** said that staff morale improved
- **23%** said that staff productivity and quality of work has improved
- **44%** said that employee retention has improved
- **23%** said they now spend less on recruitment
- **9%** noticed that absenteeism has decreased
- **35%** said consumer awareness of their commitment to be an ethical employer had increased



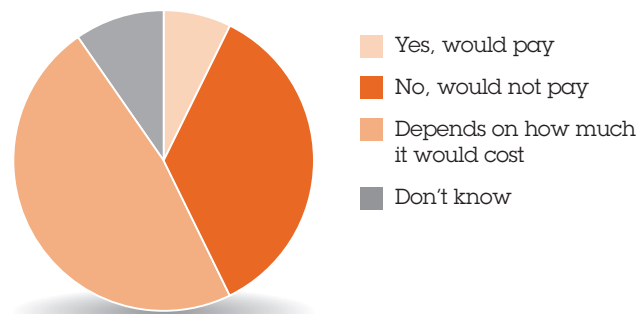
Other Benefits mentioned: Gaining a platform with a wider audience; Helping with tender submissions; Being a differentiator between competitors; Gaining work because of Living Wage status; Positive social media interaction.

Some businesses mentioned negatives as well as positives. Some comments from small and new businesses said they struggled with their outgoings and found the Living Wage had a slightly detrimental effect. Paying extra wages meant they hadn't been able to do things that might have improved sales or incomings, such as buying in new stock.

Proportion of Living Wage employers that would have paid to sign up

We asked the Living Wage employers if they would have joined the Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign if there had been a charge to sign up: **7%** said yes, they would; **36%** said no, they wouldn't; **48%** said it would depend on how much it would cost and **9%** said they were unsure.

Many commented that there would have to be a good justification for the charge, or that their business is too small to pay a fee.



Is the Government's 'National Living Wage' a good thing?

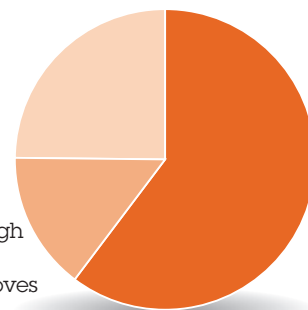
In April 2016, the government's **National Living Wage** was introduced as a compulsory rate of pay starting at £7.20 per hour, but aiming to rise to £9 by 2020. The new rate applies to those over the age of 25. We've had a lot of conversations with businesses who were confused about what they need to pay staff. Because of this, we've tried to highlight the differences by talking to businesses, writing blogs and using social media.

75% of those that responded said that they do know the differences between the Living Wage and the government's *National Living Wage*. **18%** said they didn't know, and **7%** weren't sure.

The majority of Living Wage employers thought that the *National Living Wage* is a good thing. Most of the 30 comments mentioned that it is a good start, but the rate is set too low.

- Yes, the *National Living Wage* is a good thing
- No, the *National Living Wage* is not a good thing
- Don't know

"Would be even better if it was as high as the real Living Wage. The only downside is confusion, but if it improves some people's situations it's worth it."



The Brighton & Hove Living Wage is led and managed by
Brighton & Hove Chamber of Commerce
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