

NATIONAL **vs** LOCAL RESULTS

Quarter Three 2026

Survey carried out over 3 weeks during August and September 2026.

The following statistics look at the UK National vs. Local results for Shropshire including Telford & Wrekin.

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The QES points to an economy stuck in low gear. Most firms are reporting no improvement across almost every indicator we track.

It's a positive that the decline of the preceding quarters hasn't continued, and turnover confidence has seen a slight bounce. But the underlying trend still points to flatlining, with just 17% of firms increasing their investment, a post-pandemic low.

There is also a big imbalance beneath the headline. Larger firms are driving any improvements to indicators, while the smallest businesses have seen sales and cash flow fall further. Hospitality remains the sector under the most pressure.

Firms are being held back by two constraints. Global volatility is driving up prices and pushing firms to defer investment decisions, while the underlying cost base continues to rise, particularly around employment. Our cost stack calculator shows domestic policy-driven costs alone have risen by more than 70% in the past decade for a typical SME.

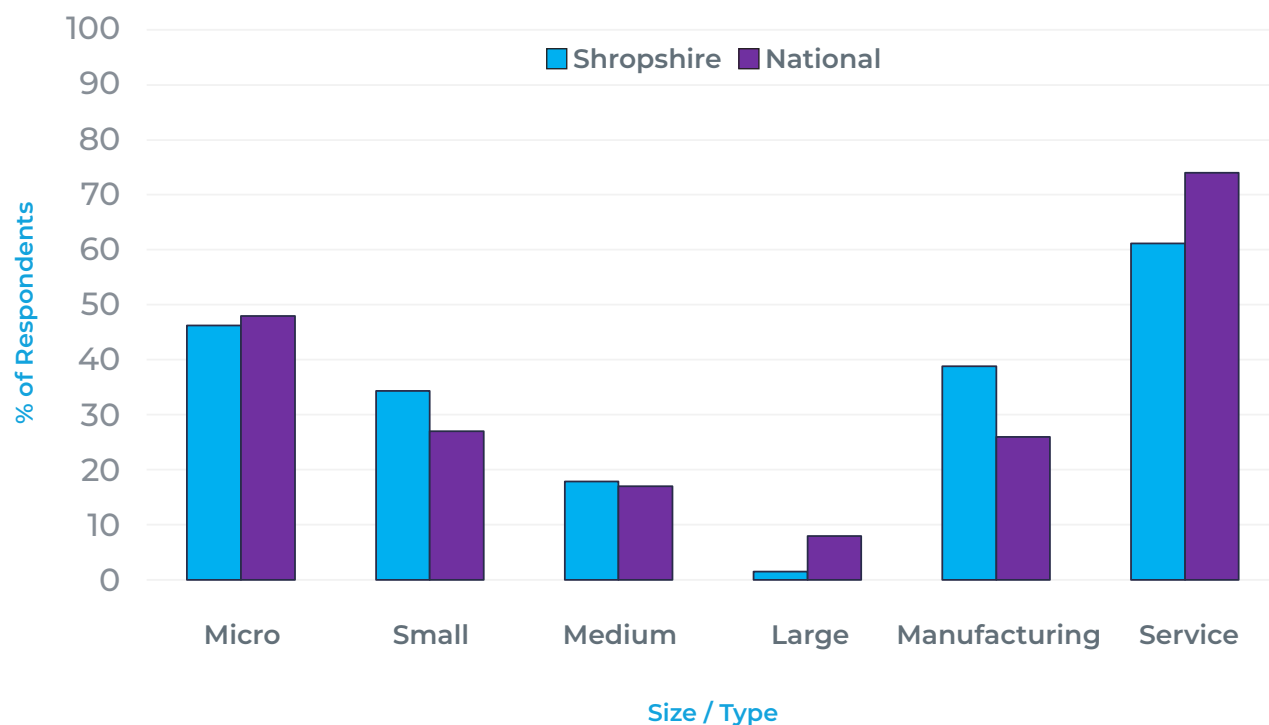
As the Chancellor finalises the Budget, every major measure should be put through our Growth Delivery Test: what will it get firms to do that they aren't doing now?

David Bharier

Head of Research, British Chambers of Commerce

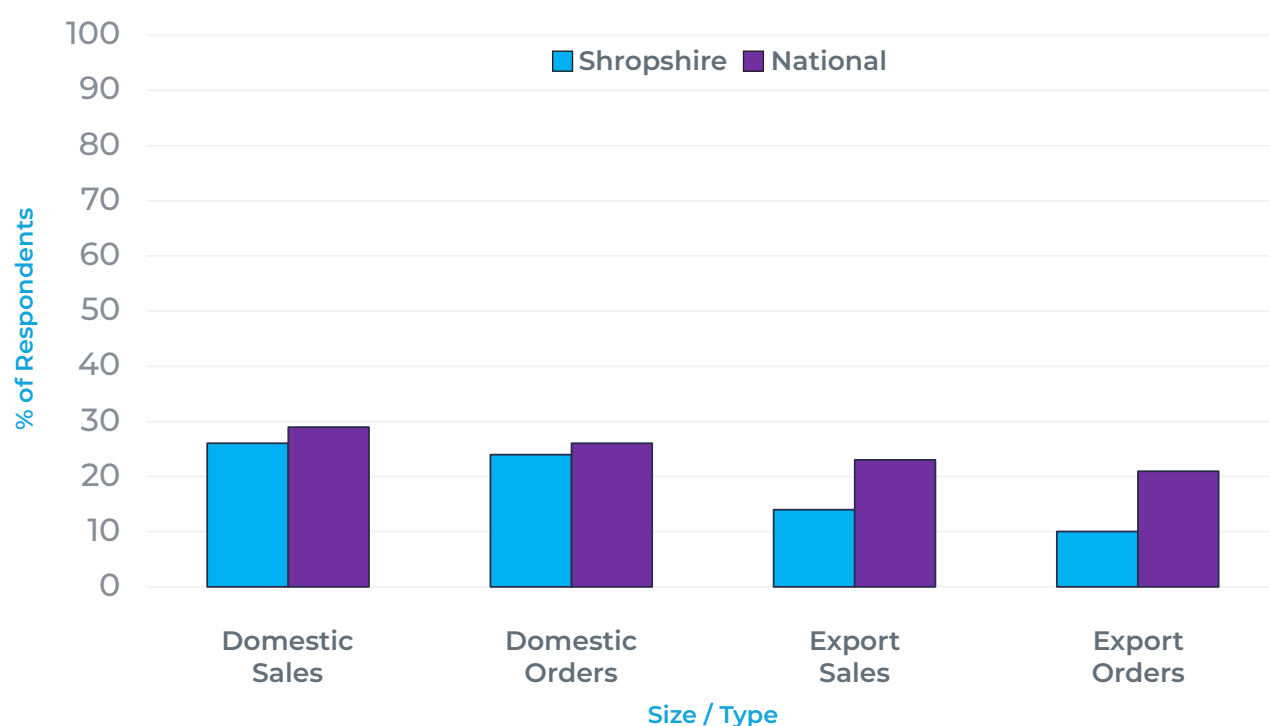
INTERVIEW SAMPLE BREAKDOWN

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



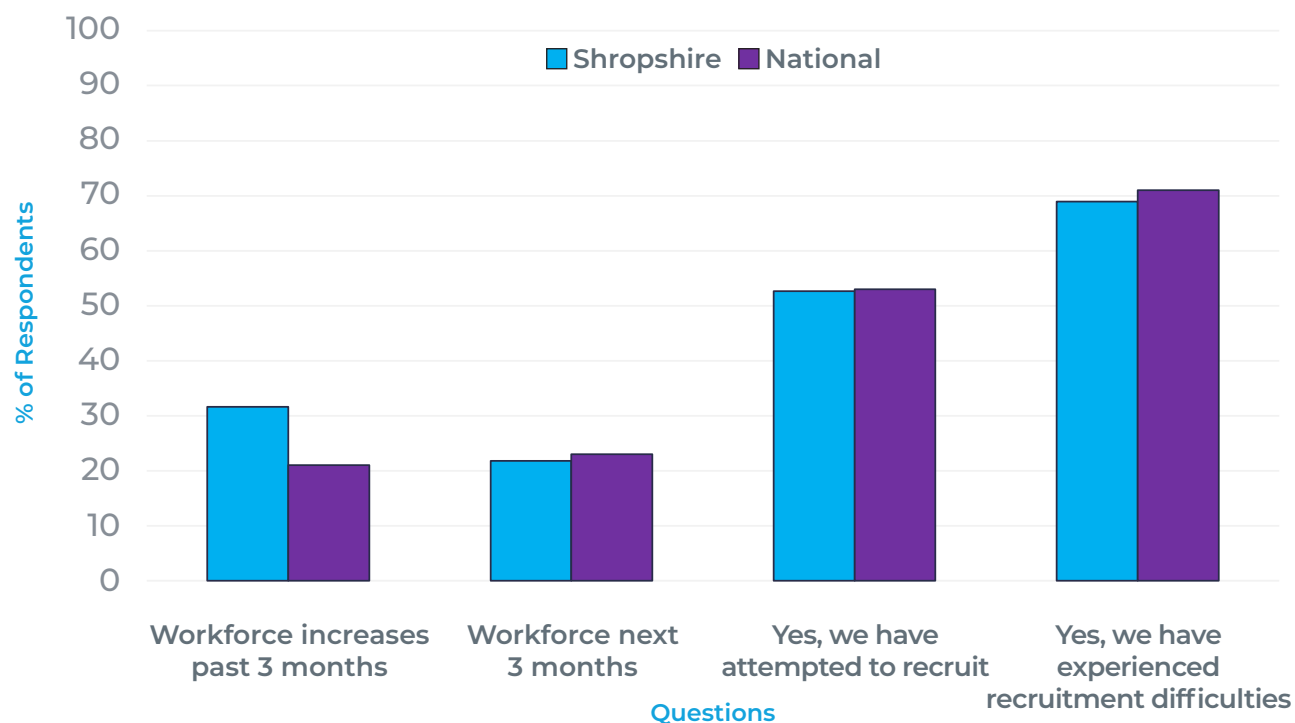
SALES & ORDERS INCREASED - DOMESTIC & EXPORT

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



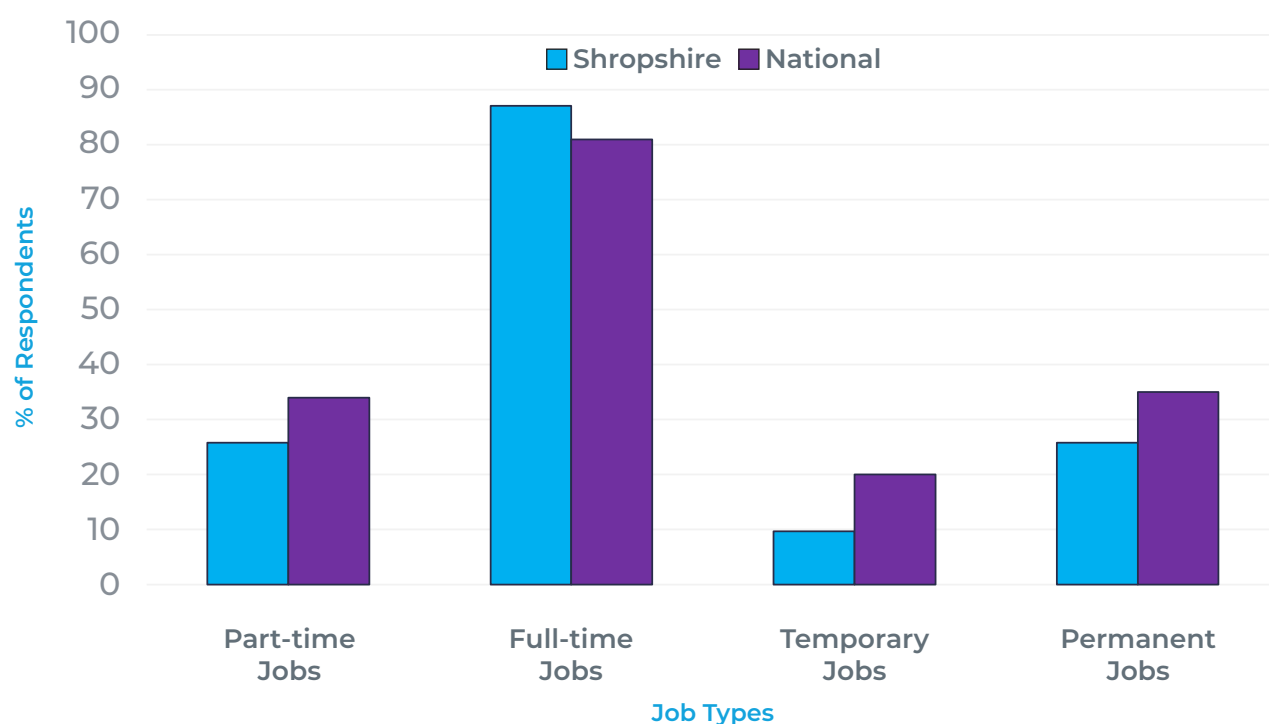
WORKFORCE INCREASES

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



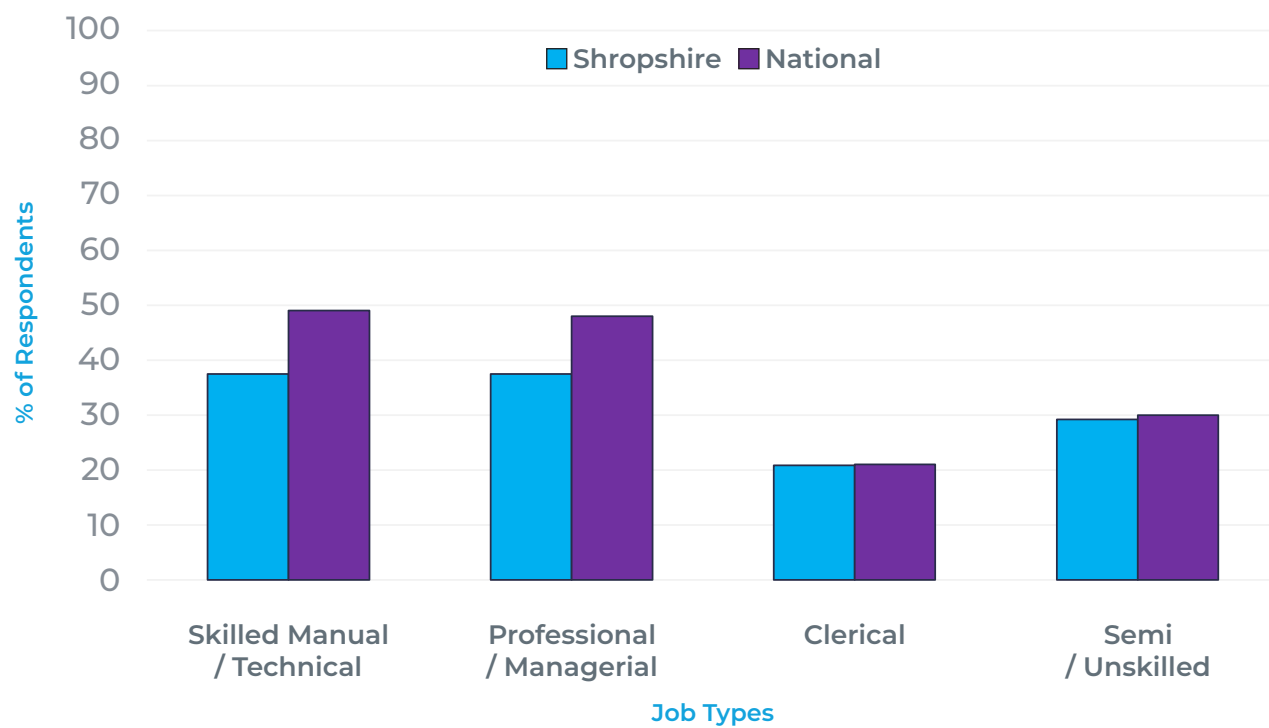
WORKFORCE RECRUITED JOB TYPES

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



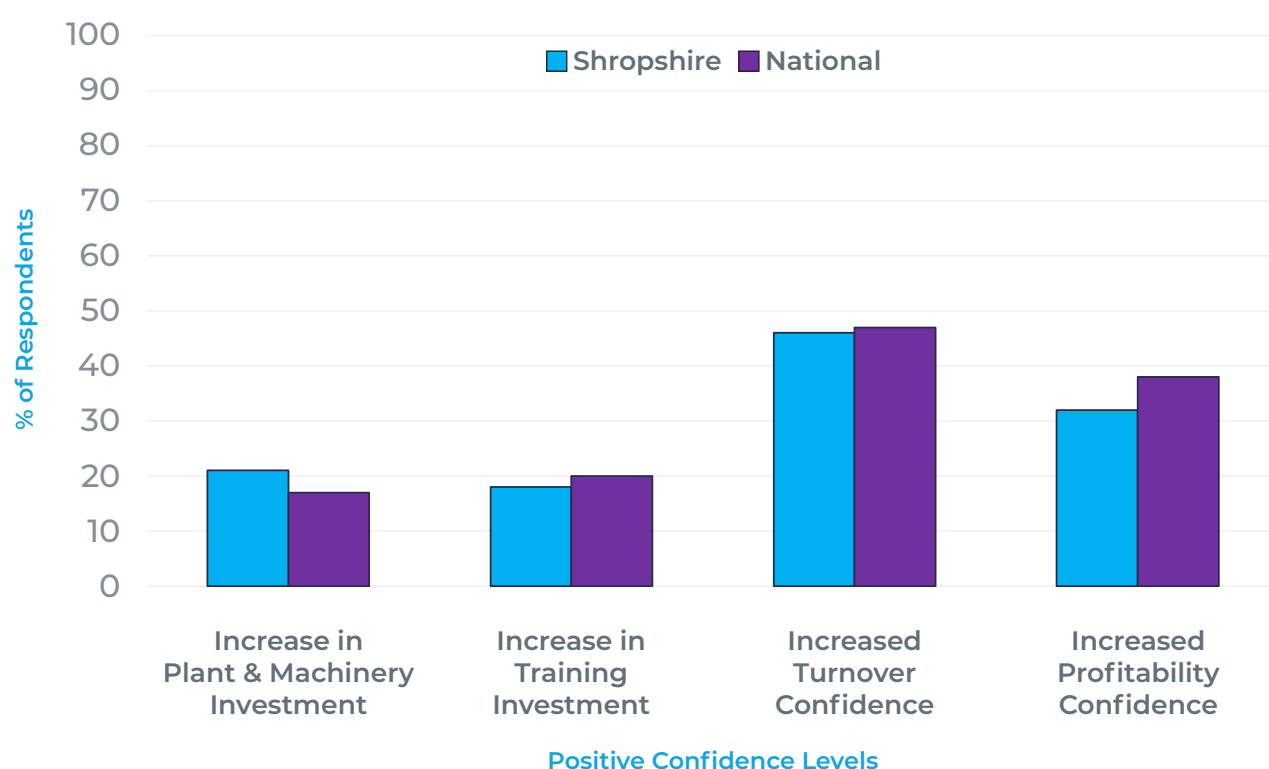
WORKFORCE RECRUITED SKILLS TYPE

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



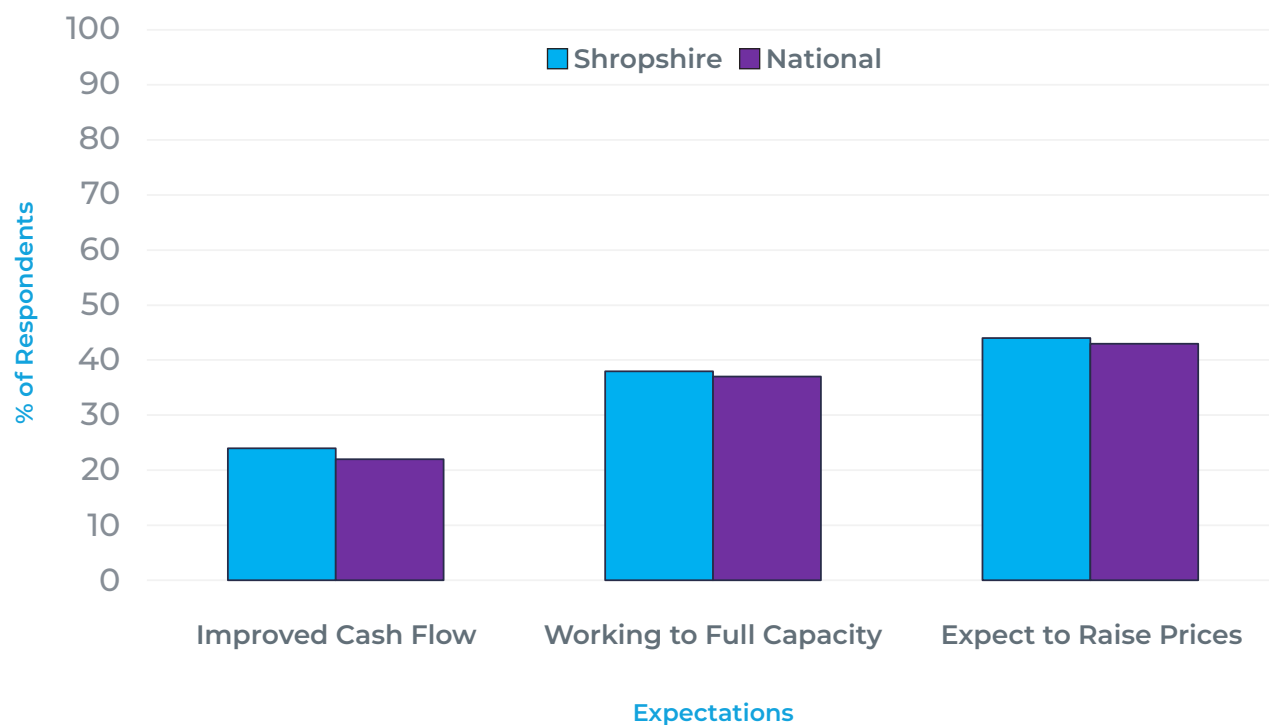
INCREASED INVESTMENT & CONFIDENCE

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



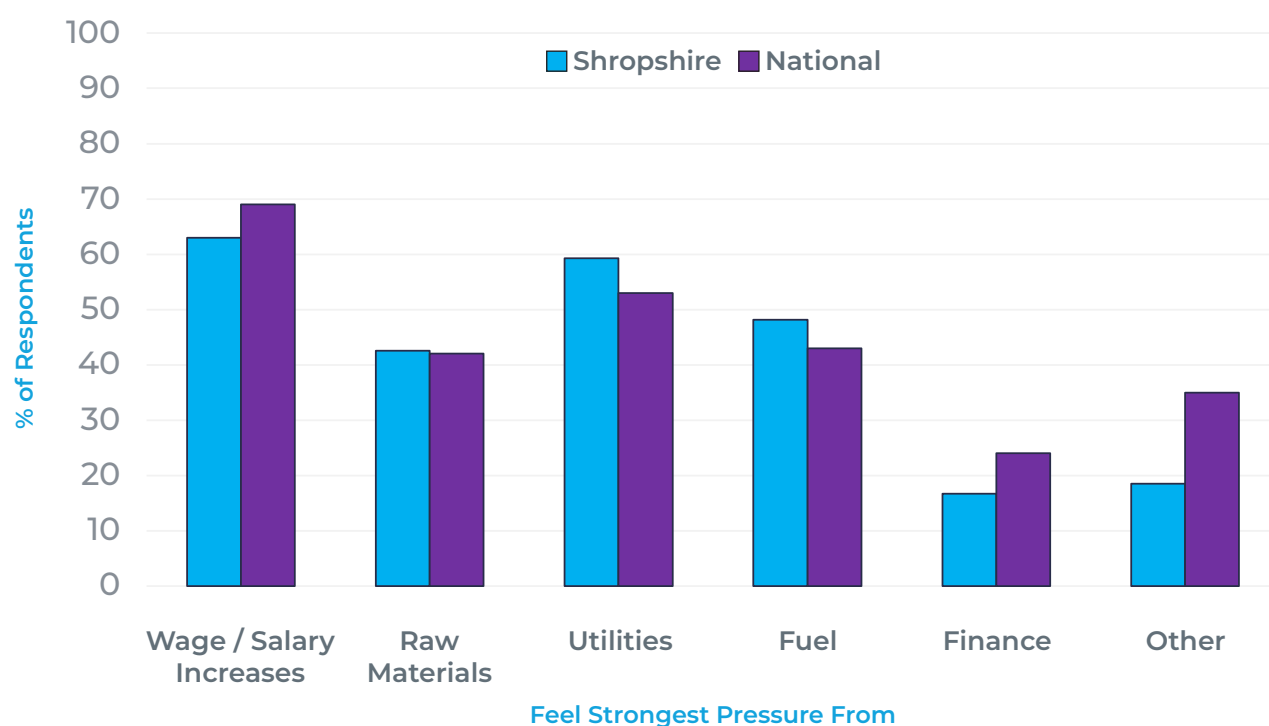
CASHFLOW, CAPACITY & PRICES

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



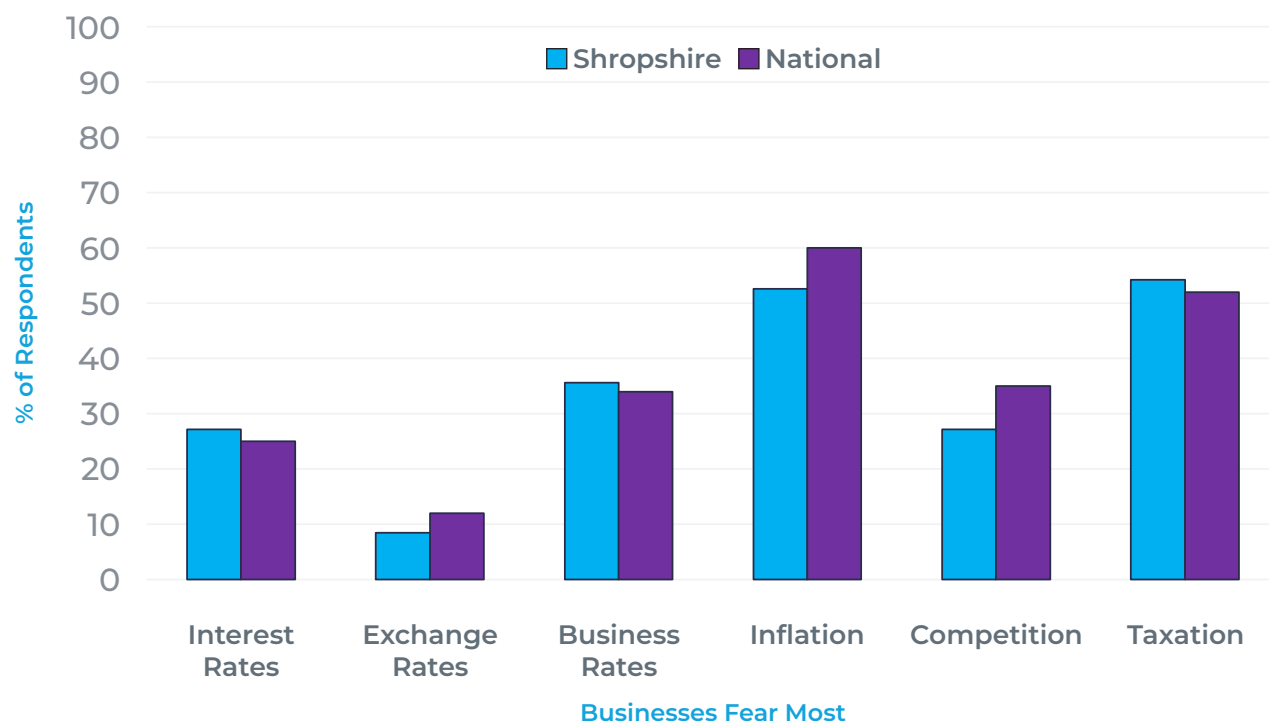
BUSINESS PRESSURES

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



BUSINESS FEARS

QES Quarter 3 - 2026



The QES (Quarterly Economic Survey) is carried out every year, four times per year.

The interview fieldwork is carried out over 3 weeks.

Quarter 1: February / March

Quarter 2: May / June

Quarter 3: August / September

Quarter 4: November

For further details and to receive invitations to take part in the surveys please email:

policy@shropshire-chamber.co.uk