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### **Devon rural businesses average turnovers up in spite of problems**

A survey of businesses in rural Devon has indicated that average business turnovers are up in many cases, in spite of problems accessing finance and obtaining good broadband speeds.

Devon Renaissance, the rural regeneration partnership organisation, has collected responses from more than 3,000 rural businesses in the past three months. Results are still being analysed but early indications show that many are being severely affected by the economic downturn.

The survey has also tracked performance of 500 businesses which were surveyed last year, and initial results here show that the effects are not necessarily what might be expected. The availability of finance has become a more significant issue since the previous survey, and many areas are still experiencing inadequate broadband speeds, but in spite of this the average business turnover has increased.

Peter Tansey, chair of Devon Renaissance, said the results so far indicate a range of issues. "It is clear that the economic downturn is having an effect on many businesses, and that they face barriers to trade in many cases.

"One of the biggest issues appears to be access to finance. We are still analysing the results so we will have a clearer picture in the next few weeks about the economic picture and what other issues are concerning businesses the most."

This is the third survey of rural Devon businesses carried out by Devon Renaissance, and previous survey results have been downloaded more than 10,000 times.

The survey was funded by Devon County Council, all Devon's district councils, and the South West RDA as well as Devon Renaissance.

Ends

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Devon Renaissance is the rural regeneration partnership organisation. It is a not-for-profit partnership of the private sector, local authorities and community-based organisations. The organisation is funded by the South West Regional Development Agency, Devon County Council, and North Devon, Torridge, West Devon, South Hams, East Devon and Teignbridge district and borough councils. Devon Renaissance provides grant funding and works with projects to help create prosperity and jobs and improve access to services in rural areas. It has had funding of £7 million over three years which is estimated to have been worth £25 million to the Devon economy with match funding.

[www.ruraldevon.org](http://www.ruraldevon.org)

Release issued by pr dogs limited, public relations consultants, on behalf of Devon Renaissance. For further information or to arrange an interview please contact John Taynton of pr dogs on 01822 600100 or 0773 999 7353 or email [john.taynton@prdogs.com](mailto:john.taynton@prdogs.com)