



VCSE Office Space Needs: Findings from the Follow-Up Survey

The survey, ***Follow-up Survey: VCSE Office Space Needs***, conducted in November 2025, gathered responses from 9 VCSE organisations in Kingston to understand their current and future office space requirements. The purpose of the survey was to explore key challenges, accessibility needs, affordability constraints, and openness to co-location.

The findings will help inform Kingston Council's property team by providing insight into demand and supporting the assessment of suitable spaces that could be made available by Kingston Council.

This survey was distributed exclusively to the 24 organisations that had responded to the initial survey, ***VCSE Sector Office Space (Premises) Survey 2025 - Expression of Interest***, conducted in July 2025.

Current Situation

Five of the nine organisations currently do not have office space. The remaining four face challenges related to costs, accessibility, space limitations, safety, suitability for service delivery, and environmental sustainability. Their existing leases are due to expire between 2025 and 2027.

Three organisations need to find a new space immediately; two within 3-6 months; three within 6-12 months; and one in more than 12 months.

One organisation is already in discussion with a provider, and another is using space provided by the council. Two organisations expressed interest in specific council-owned properties.

Four organisations have a business plan, four are developing one, and one does not have a plan. All organisations consented to be contacted by Kingston Council.

Space Requirements

Most organisations expressed a need for meeting rooms (7), private offices (5), event spaces (5), and storage facilities (4), while there was less interest in confidential spaces (2), hotdesking (1), and shared offices (1).

The size requirements varied significantly, ranging from 25 square metres to 1,500 square metres.

Accessibility was a priority, with lift access (6), step-free access (4), and accessible toilets (4) being the most common needs. Parking for disabled users, staff, and visitors (3) and quiet spaces (2) were mentioned less frequently.

Essential amenities included Wi-Fi (7) and kitchen facilities (7), secure storage (4) also considered important. Reception area (2), printing facilities (2), and café spaces (1) were lower priorities.

Co-location

Seven organisations indicated they would consider co-location and are willing to share facilities, such as reception areas, meeting rooms, kitchens, event spaces, and back-office functions, including printing and administration.

Location Preferences

There was strong demand for Kingston Town Centre (7), New Malden (6), Surbiton (5), and Tolworth (4), with Low interest in Hook (2), North Kingston (2), Chessington (1), Old Malden (1), South of the Borough (1) and Malden Rushett (1)

Good transport links were suggested as an important consideration.

Budget

Organisations reported a wide range of affordability, from under £500 to £3,000 per month. Service charge budgets were generally low, ranging from £50 to £300, indicating tight financial constraints. Only one organisation has fully secured funding for premises, four have partial funding, and two will need to seek full funding. One organisation is currently assessing moving costs and long-term funding.

Length and Type of Agreement

Most organisations are flexible regarding lease lengths (7), others showed preferences ranging from 1 to 3 years (1) and to a minimum of 3 years (1). Most are open to lease or rental agreements (7), others mentioned a preference for an informal arrangement (1) and standard rental agreements (1).

Recommendations

1. Map available council properties to match identified needs.
2. Ensure affordability and accessibility compliance in proposed spaces.
3. Explore solutions and flexible lease options for those with immediate needs.
4. Offer workshops on budgeting for premises, fundraising for core costs, and business plan development.

5. Explore the potential for developing a VCSE Co-location Hub in Kingston Town Centre with separate offices, but shared facilities, to reduce costs, and foster collaboration.

Kingston Voluntary Action

3 December 2025