

# INVEST IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

**Annual Report  
April 2008 – March 2009**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Invest in Gloucestershire Annual Report 2008/9 is designed to provide an overview of enquiry levels for inward and local investment activity within Gloucestershire, using data extracted from the Evolute commercial land and property database, as supported by Gloucestershire First, Gloucestershire County Council, and the six District Local Authorities.
- 1.2 The purpose of producing this report is to allow partners in Local Authorities, agents, property developers, and any other interested party, to have access to the type and localities of enquiries which are receiving interest. The figures extracted are indicative rather than definitive, as some enquiries are more specific than others, and occasionally it is difficult to compare 'like with like'. Where possible we have included a comparison with data from the previous year, to provide an indication of trends. For some data it is not possible to go back beyond 2007 due to changes in the database, however, we hope that this report will help to form a basis for ongoing trend monitoring and an evidence base for the Investment Team at Gloucestershire First.
- 1.3 We would welcome constructive feedback and suggestions based on this report, from users of the [www.investinglos.co.uk](http://www.investinglos.co.uk) website and property search, from economic development and planning professionals, commercial agents and developers, and anyone else with an interest in increasing investment within the county.

## **2.0 Challenges**

- 2.1 The increasing popularity of web-based searches in recent years has led to a number of problems in the quality and capture of data, as a balance must be maintained between ensuring clients are not put off at the registration page and so that the system is flexible and easy for the user.
- 2.2 Some clients continue to register on multiple occasions, which can create difficulties in calculating unique enquiries. To reflect this the total overall number of enquiries has been recorded but subsequent analysis is based on appropriate measures. Council and multiple enquiries are removed where appropriate as these can inadvertently 'skew' results by suggesting we are receiving large numbers of investment enquiries from major employers.
- 2.3 The biggest gaps in data relate to requirement by size of property/land at a district level, and in recording 'successes'. The first 'gap' is due to problems of web data capture. It is possible to change the search facility to correct this, but this will result in some inconvenience for the client – by introducing a search by size band (1-250 sq ft, 1000-2000 sq ft, etc) rather than a 'free search' which is currently available, and which prevents the difficulty of searching across two or more size bands. We would welcome feedback from users and agents on this point.
- 2.4 The second issue, recording successes, continues to be hampered by a number of factors. The difficulty of contacting enquirers at regular intervals over a protracted period, and the ongoing nature of some of the requirements, means that the successful resolution of some enquiries is not always recorded. It is unusual for agents to provide details of companies who have moved, as they are usually unable to name them during negotiations, and it is an understandably low priority for them to provide these details in line with public sector reporting. Despite follow up calls and emails it is also difficult to get companies to provide information when they move and we would welcome feedback and suggestions from partners and agents to address this matter.
- 2.5 A number of comments over the user experience of the Invest in Gloucestershire website have been noted, and therefore we will be making some changes to the visibility and registration processes to help address these issues in future.

### 3.0 Comparison of Annual Enquiry Levels

3.1 The Invest in Gloucestershire service records enquiries received for information about commercial land and property within Gloucestershire. This information provides an indication of the levels of interest in current markets, and a comparison of enquiries by preferred location, size and type of property, etc. For the purposes of this report, we have included the total number of officially recorded enquiries, and then carried out subsequent analysis to provide a more in-depth review of the nature and quality of the enquiries.

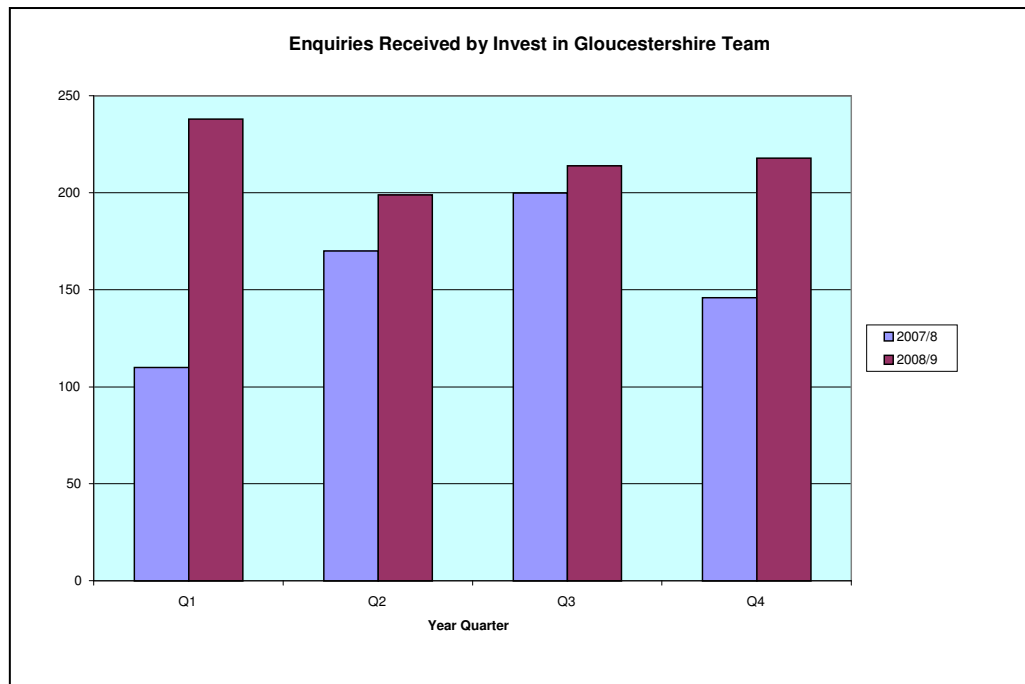
The enquiries recorded are from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009, and are compared with the same period in 2007/8.

Table 1

Time Period	Quarter	No. of Enquiries
2008/2009	Q1	238
	Q2	199
	Q3	214
	Q4	218
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>869</b>
2007/2008	Q1	110
	Q2	170
	Q3	200
	Q4	146
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>626</b>

3.2 Figure 1 demonstrates the numbers of enquiries received by the Invest in Gloucestershire Team on a quarterly basis. Q1 represents April – June. 869 enquiries were received in 2008/9, an increase of 243 from the previous year. A significant proportion of these were multiple visits\*\* and this is shown in more detail in other charts.

Figure 1



3.3 The impact of the recession has made it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the enquiries received over the 2008/9 and 2007/8 periods. The figures demonstrate a 28% increase in the level of enquiries in 2008/9 compared to the previous year, however these numbers contain a large proportion of multiple, council enquiries and a new category 'Global Ventures/Opportunities\*', as well as commercial agents visiting the site, and some of these may be based on research in an uncertain market, rather than actual property requirements.

\*Multiple visits by the same user also includes agents and consultants registering enquiries on behalf of clients. This means some may be unique enquiries but this is not always clear from the information provided

\*\*Overseas global ventures/opportunities are enquiries from overseas companies looking for technology, academic or supply chain partners, for joint ventures, acquisition, etc. These are not normally property-related but are recorded as investment enquiries.

## 4.0 Enquiries by Company Location

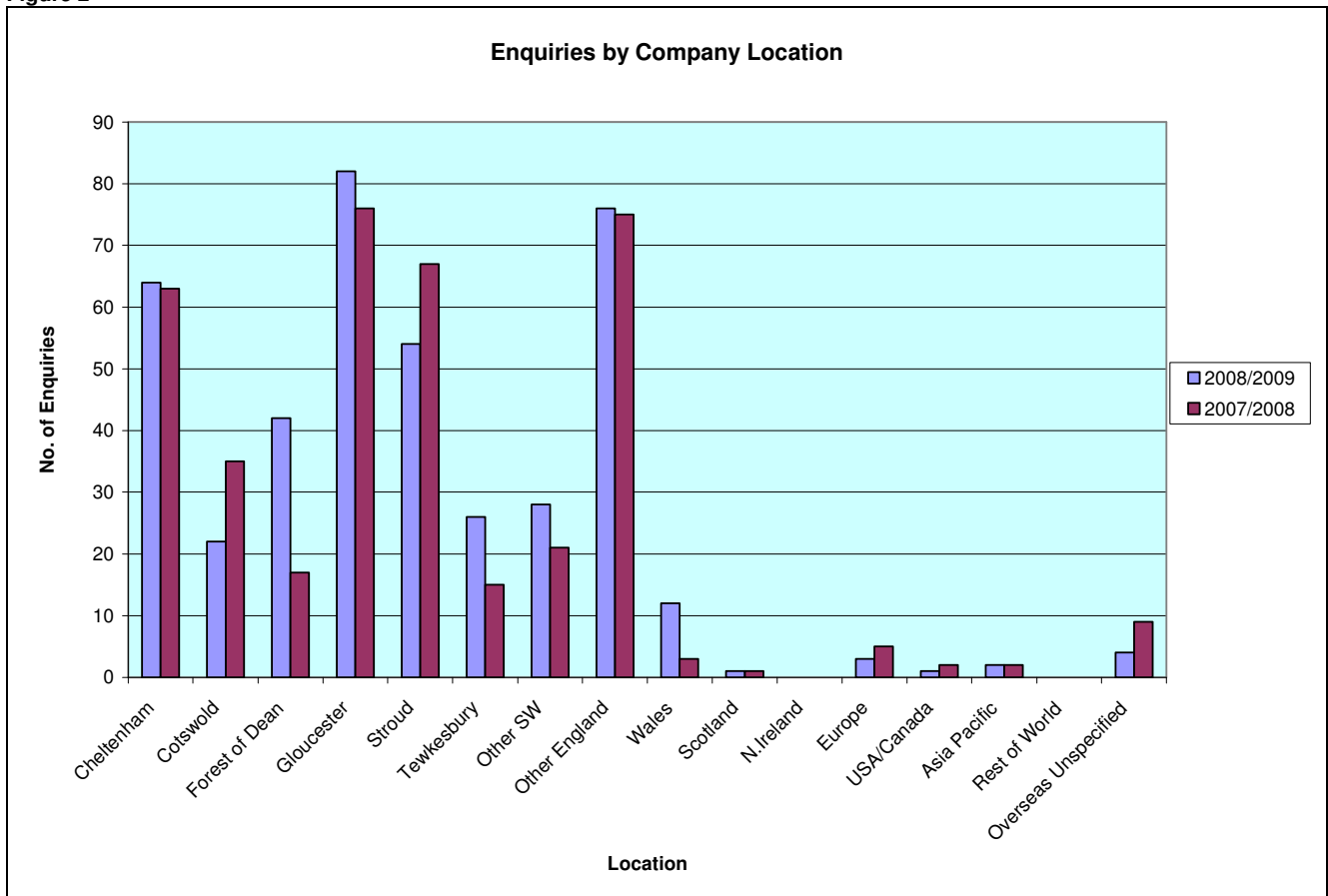
4.1 The table contains a breakdown of numbers by the original location of the enquirer. By capturing this information, we are able to monitor both indigenous and inward investment, including foreign direct investment (FDI) enquiries. Some enquiries are registered anonymously, often through an agent or third party, and these are also indicated below. Multiple enquiries, council registered enquiries and a new category – overseas global ventures/opportunities are listed separately. The latter are not commercial property searches, but are requests for intelligence on companies which may want to partner on specific technology projects with overseas companies.

Table 2

Company Location	2008/2009	2007/2008
Cheltenham	64	63
Cotswold	22	35
Forest of Dean	42	17
Gloucester	82	76
Stroud	54	67
Tewkesbury	26	15
Other South West	28	21
Other England	76	75
Wales	12	3
Scotland	1	1
N. Ireland	0	0
Europe	3	5
USA/Canada	1	2
Asia Pacific	2	2
Rest of World	0	0
Overseas - Unspecified	4	9
For Client - Unspecified	68	36
Unknown	2	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>432</b>

Other Enquiries		
Overseas - Global Ventures/Opportunities	70	**N/A
Council Enquiries	46	33
Multiple visits	266	161
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>194</b>

Figure 2



## 5.0 Enquiries by Company Size

5.1 The level of enquiries by number of employees is recorded in Table 3. The figures indicate that small business searches for companies with 10 or less employees are by far the most likely to use the enquiry service (47% of enquiries listed below in 2008/9 or 54% excluding global partnering opportunities). Council and multiple enquiries were removed from this search to provide a more representative sample of the companies looking for premises. One factor which makes it difficult to measure enquiries by larger companies are the searches performed by third parties, such as agents and consultants, particularly as they are often likely to be employed in larger and more complex searches.

Table 3

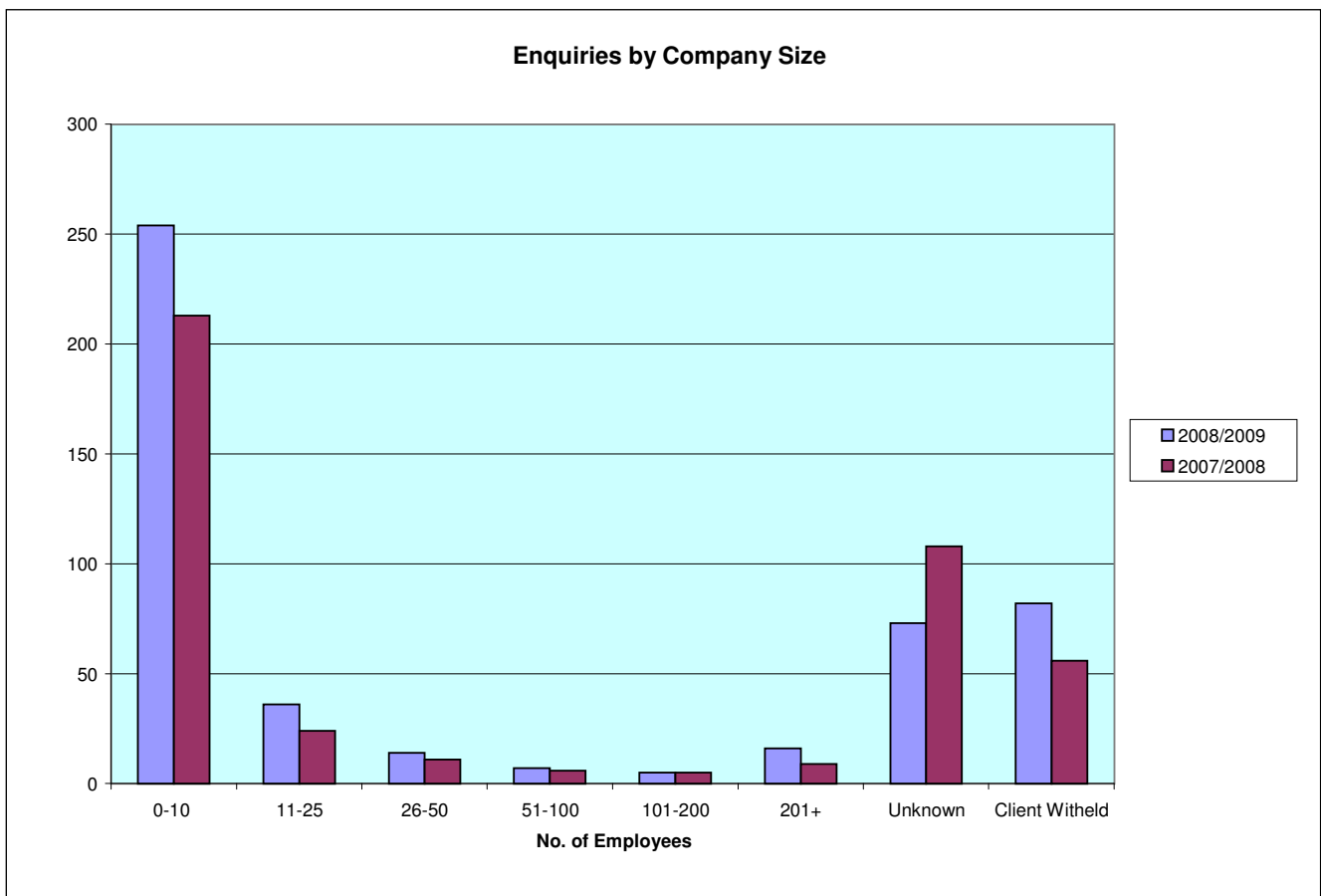
Size Band – Enquirer	2008/2009	2007/2008
0 – 10 employees	254	213
11 – 25 employees	36	24
26 – 50 employees	14	11
51 – 100 employees	7	6
101 – 200 employees	5	5
201+ employees	16	9
Unknown	73	108
Client withheld	82	56
N/A (Global Partner Opps)	(70)	(N/A)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>432</b>

\*Council & multiple enquiries not included

5.2 Figure 3 indicates the major difference between the numbers of small business enquiries and larger company registrations. The high number of 'unknown' and 'client withheld' enquiries however, may obscure the number of larger companies using the search service, either directly or indirectly, through a third party.

5.3 Although significantly lower in numbers of enquiries than from business start-ups, there were still encouraging signs of levels of enquiries from employers in the 11-25 and 201+ employees' categories.

Figure 3



## 6.0 Reason for Enquiries

6.1 Table 4 indicates that there was a drop in new business start-ups from 99 in 2007/2008 to 79 in 2008/9, and it seems likely that this is a direct result of the recession. The number of unspecified enquiries however increased significantly (up by 40), and it is possible this figure may include other start-ups.

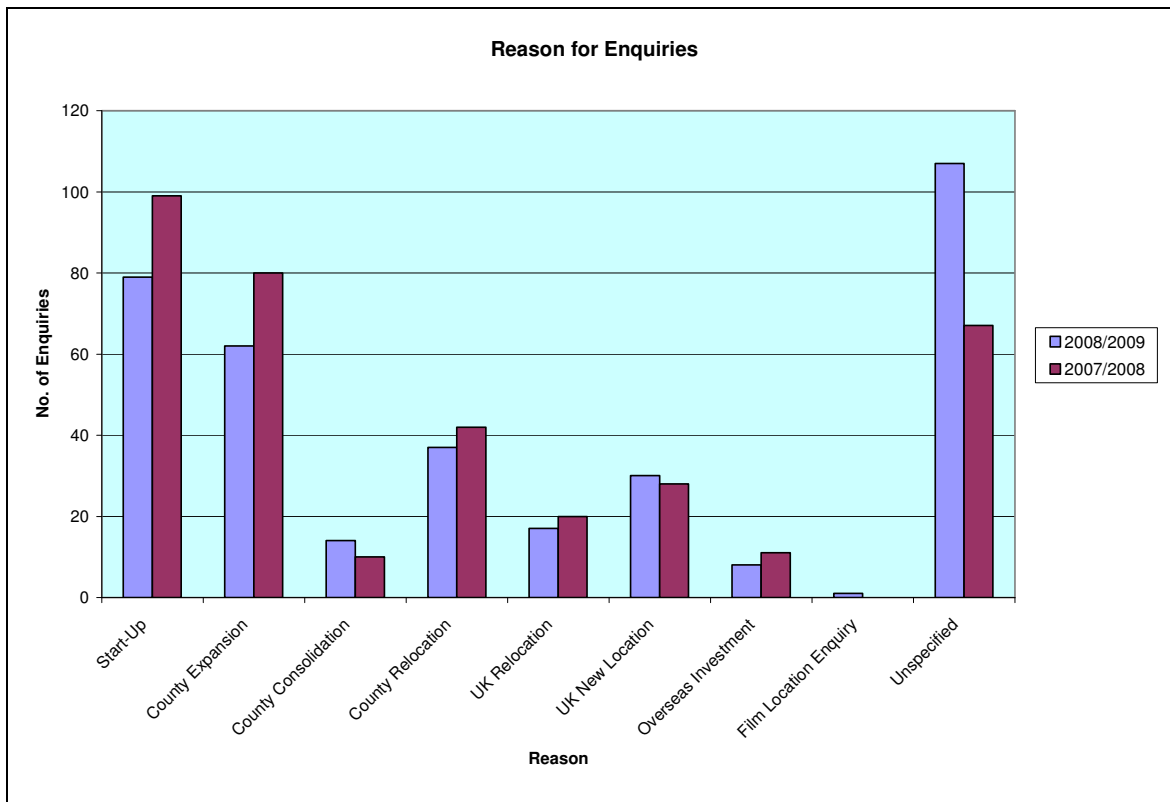
6.2 It is interesting to note that more companies were still using the service for county expansions rather than consolidations, in light of the current economic climate.

Table 4

Reason for Enquiries	2008/2009	2007/2008
New start-up	79	99
County Relocation (Expansion)	62	80
County Relocation (Consolidation)	14	10
County Relocation (Unspecified)	37	42
UK Relocation	17	20
UK New Location	30	28
Overseas Investment	8	11
Property Research	174	115
Overseas Joint Venture	69	N/A
Film Location Enquiry	1	N/A
Unspecified	107	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>472</b>

\*Council & multiple enquiries not included (other than agent enquiries which have been included where they provided this information on behalf of a client – resulting in a different totals to those in Table 3)

Figure 4



## 7.0 Enquiries by Sector

7.1 Some assumptions were made in gathering this information, and it is therefore an indicative list only of company enquiries by sector. In particular, manufacturing & distribution may be over-represented in this list, as assumptions were made based on unit type, rather than a description of specific activities. Equally, the service sector is probably under-represented, as it was more difficult to categorise office enquiries, and more were therefore categorised as 'sector unknown'.

Table 5

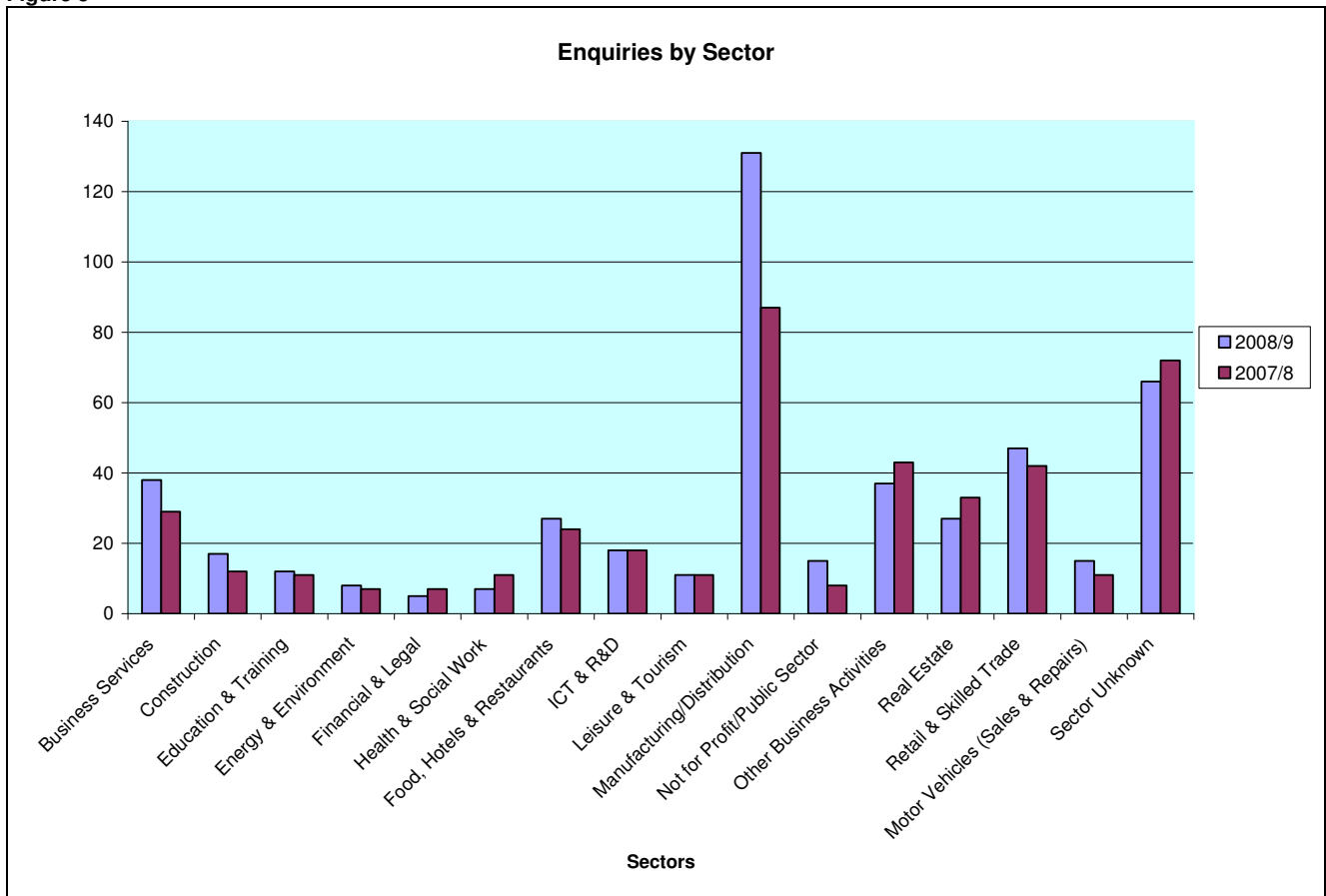
Enquiries by Sector	2008/2009	2007/2008
Business Services	38	29
Construction	17	12
Education and Training	12	11
Energy and Environment	8	7
Financial and Legal	5	7
Health and Social Work	7	11
Food, Hotels & Restaurants	27	24
ICT and R & D	18	18
Leisure and Tourism	11	11
Manufacturing & Distribution	131	87
Not for Profit/Public Sector	15	8
Other Business Activities	37	53
Real Estate Activities	27	33
Retail & Skilled Trade	47	42
Sale/Maintenace of Motor Vehicles	15	11
Sector Unknown	66	72
Global joint venture/opps**	70	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>436</b>

\*Council & multiple enquiries not included (except individual agent enquiries where information provided on behalf of client)

\*\*Not included in Figure 5 as not specific to Gloucestershire and would skew the total R&D figures

7.2 Manufacturing/distribution enquiries may be slightly over-represented below, and service industries slightly under-represented. New methods to capture this information via the registration process will be explored to improve data collection. Global ventures/opportunities are not included below as they are not specific to Gloucestershire.

Figure 5



## 8.0 Enquiries by Source

8.1 The information included in Table 6 has been included for reference, but due to the overwhelming majority of searches now being conducted by the website, (85% of total enquiries) a method of a two-layer data capture (e.g. referring agent and website) will be explored as part of the enquiry registration process.

Table 6

Enquiries by Source	2008/2009	2007/2008
Agent	15	8
Business Link	5	4
County Council	1	2
Direct Contact	20	51
District Councils	2	14
SW RDA	74	21
SW RDA/PERA	7	N/A
Website	741	519
Unspecified	4	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>626</b>

## 9.0 Enquiries by Preferred District

9.1 Table 7 indicates the number of times enquirers have opted to view property results from specific districts within Gloucestershire. Most enquirers view properties across multiple districts, so the comparison with the previous year allows benchmarking of enquiry levels. Cheltenham, Forest of Dean and Tewkesbury all recorded slight increases, with Cotswold, Gloucester and Stroud enquiries decreasing.

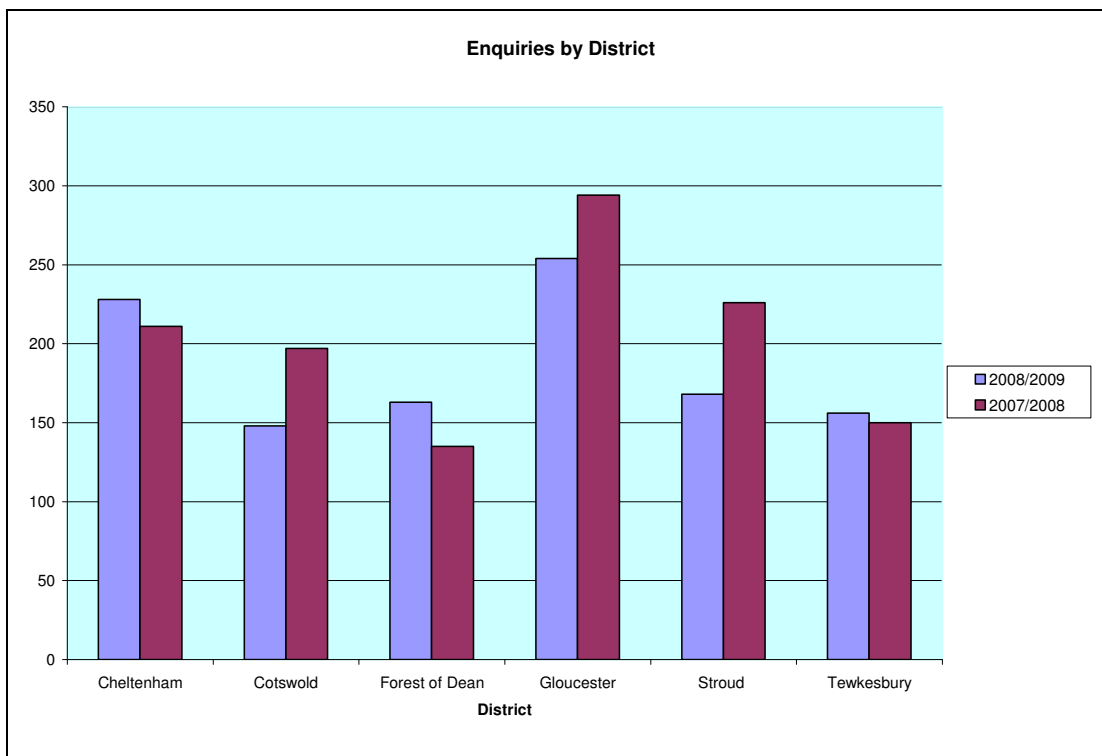
Table 7

Enquiries by District	2008/2009	2007/2008
Cheltenham	228	211
Cotswold	148	197
Forest of Dean	163	135
Gloucester	254	294
Stroud	168	226
Tewkesbury	156	150

Table 7 indicates the total number of times districts were selected by enquirers searching for land or property. (Each enquirer may select multiple districts to search.)

9.2 Although showing a decrease in enquiry numbers from the previous year, Gloucester still reflects the highest overall number of enquiries for each of the districts. Stroud, with a decrease of 58 enquiries from the previous year, saw the biggest drop in enquiry levels.

Figure 6



9.3 Tables 8 & 9 demonstrate the types of premises searched for by district, per annum. Demand for industrial/warehousing accommodation appears to have remained strong, while retail and investment enquiries also held up well despite the downturn. Land enquiries for commercial development were generally lower however, reflecting trends in the commercial market, and the lessening of speculative development.

**Table 8  
2008-2009**

District Premises Enquiries	Ind/Warehouse	Investment	Office	Retail	Land
Cheltenham	215	58	105	92	77
Cotswold	157	44	60	61	71
Forest of Dean	146	44	56	60	56
Gloucester	249	65	115	112	89
Stroud	198	65	87	81	81
Tewkesbury	144	33	63	50	49

**Table 9  
2007-2008**

District Premises Enquiries	Ind/Warehouse	Investment	Office	Retail	Land
Cheltenham	158	49	84	89	85
Cotswold	121	42	64	66	75
Forest of Dean	81	31	40	40	64
Gloucester	188	73	110	106	112
Stroud	142	57	78	66	89
Tewkesbury	111	30	43	40	68

Tables 8 & 9 indicate the total number of times specific unit types were requested by enquiries per district. Each enquiry may indicate multiple preferences for location and unit type.

9.4 The charts (Fig 7, 8 & 9) below illustrate the demand for property type by district for the last two years, with Fig 9 demonstrating the increase/decreasing levels of enquiries under each category.

**Figure 7**

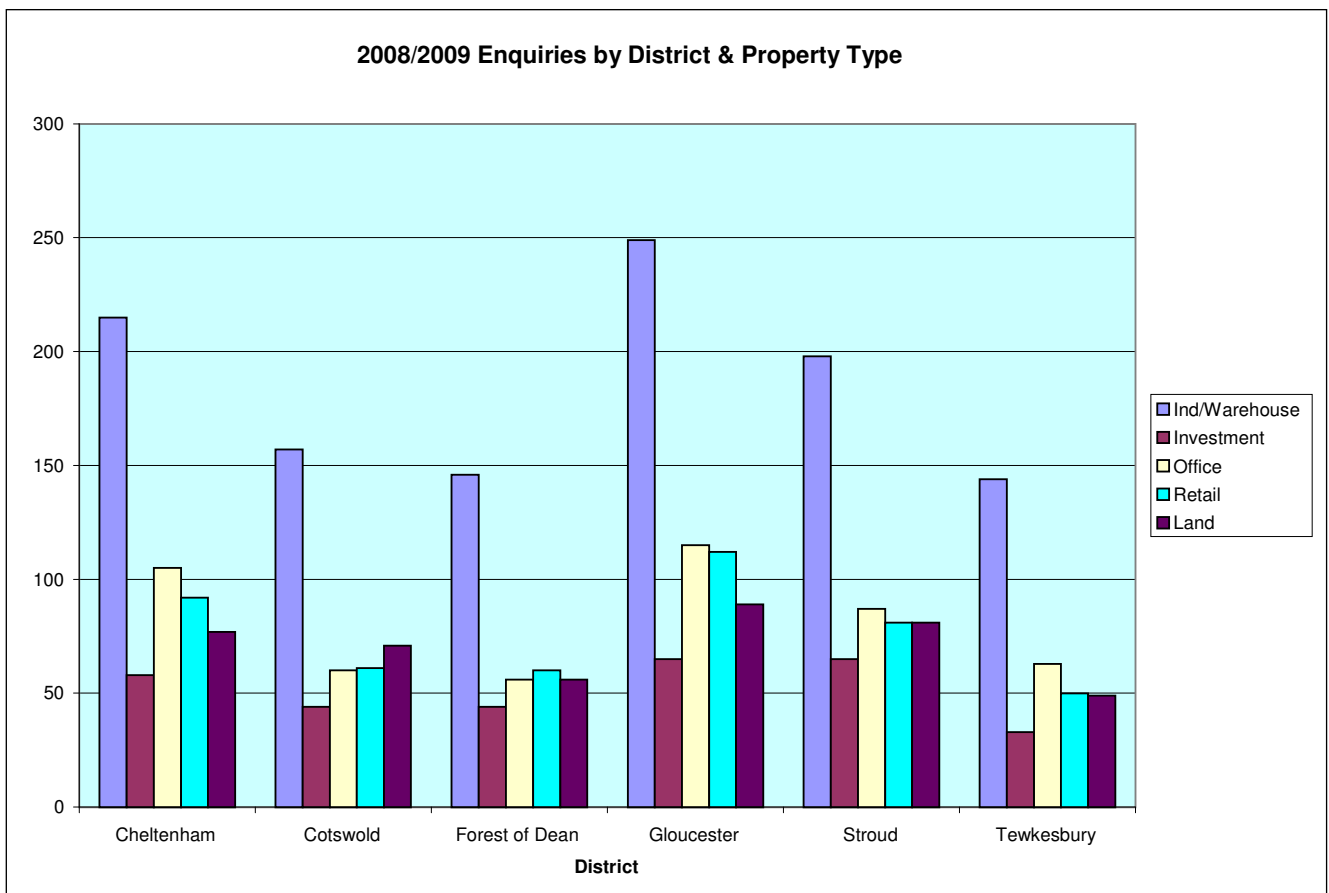


Figure 8

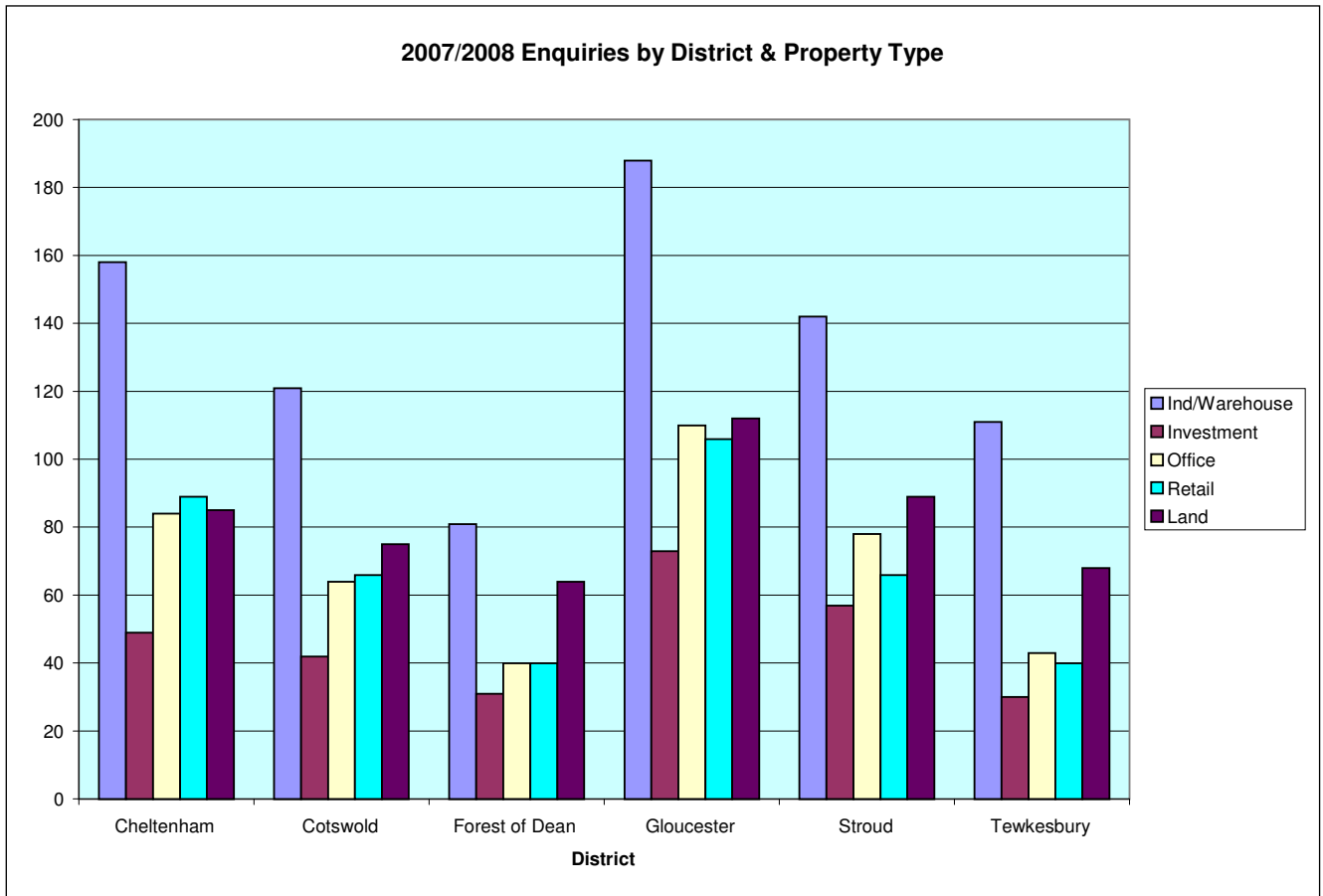
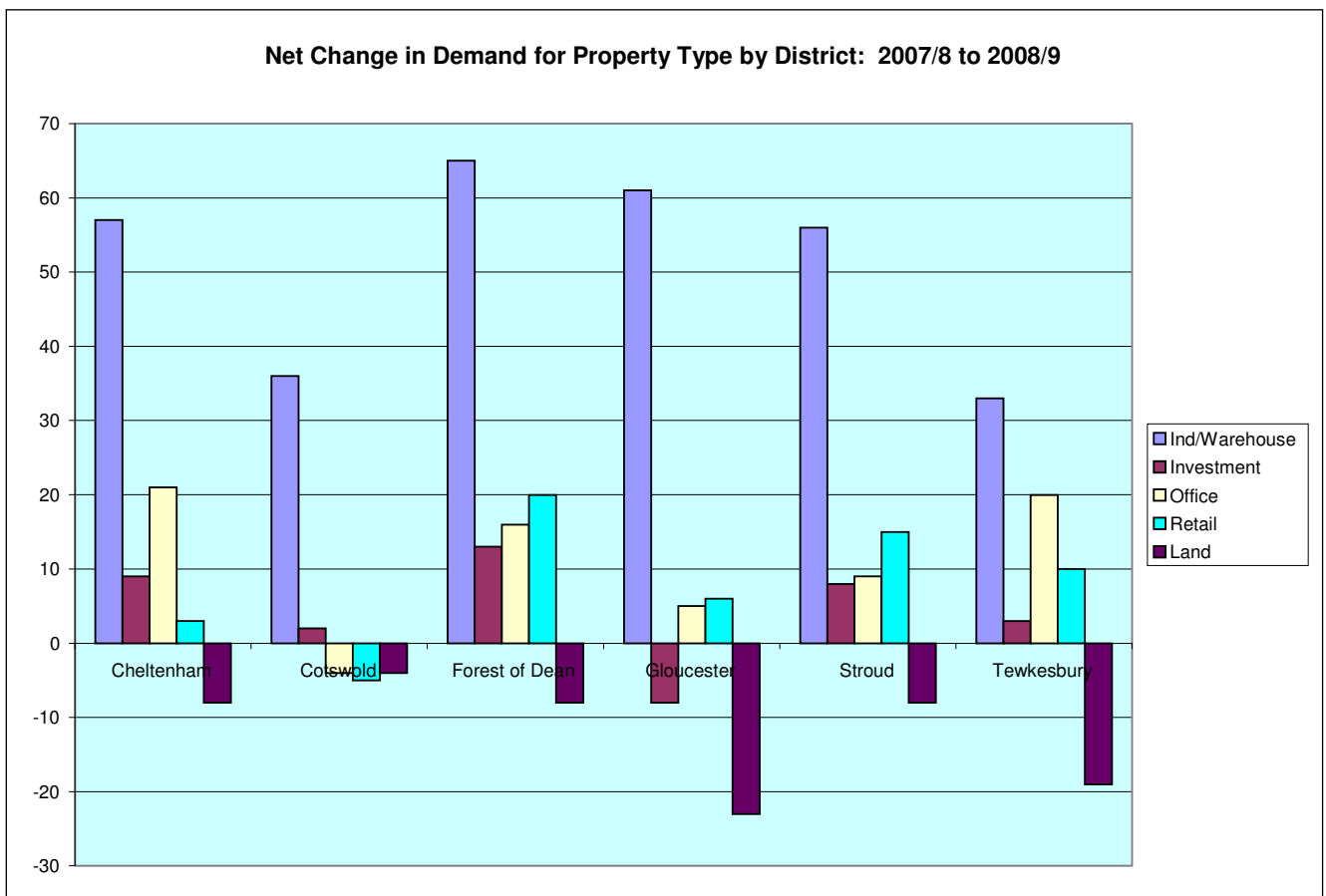


Figure 9



## 10.0 Availability of Property and Demand by Size

The information in the tables below provides a 'snapshot' of unit availability by type of premises (e.g. industrial/warehouse, office or retail) on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. Enquiry demand for the previous 3 months is then shown for this size and type of property, followed by demand over the preceding 12 month period.

### Industrial/Warehouse

	Units available (31.3.09)	Demand – previous 3 mths	Demand previous 12 mths
1 – 499 sq ft	7	1	6
500 – 999 sq ft	18	0	10
1,000 – 2,499 sq ft	92	15	82
2,500 – 4,999 sq ft	55	12	56
5,000 – 9,999 sq ft	49	9	52
10,000 – 24,999 sq ft	40	10	47
25,000 – 49,999 sq ft	14	0	24
50,000 – 99,999 sq ft	10	9	29
100,000 + sq ft	6	6	14

Note: figures are only available by county, not at district level. Land figures unavailable.

The charts below indicate available properties by size of the premises (blue line), as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, and then demand over the previous 3 months is indicated by the green line, and over the preceding 12 months by the red line. The left hand axis indicates both the number of available units (blue) and the number of enquiries received for this property size and type (green and red).

Figure 10

Industrial/Warehouse - Snapshot of Availability & Demand (as at 31 Mar 2009)

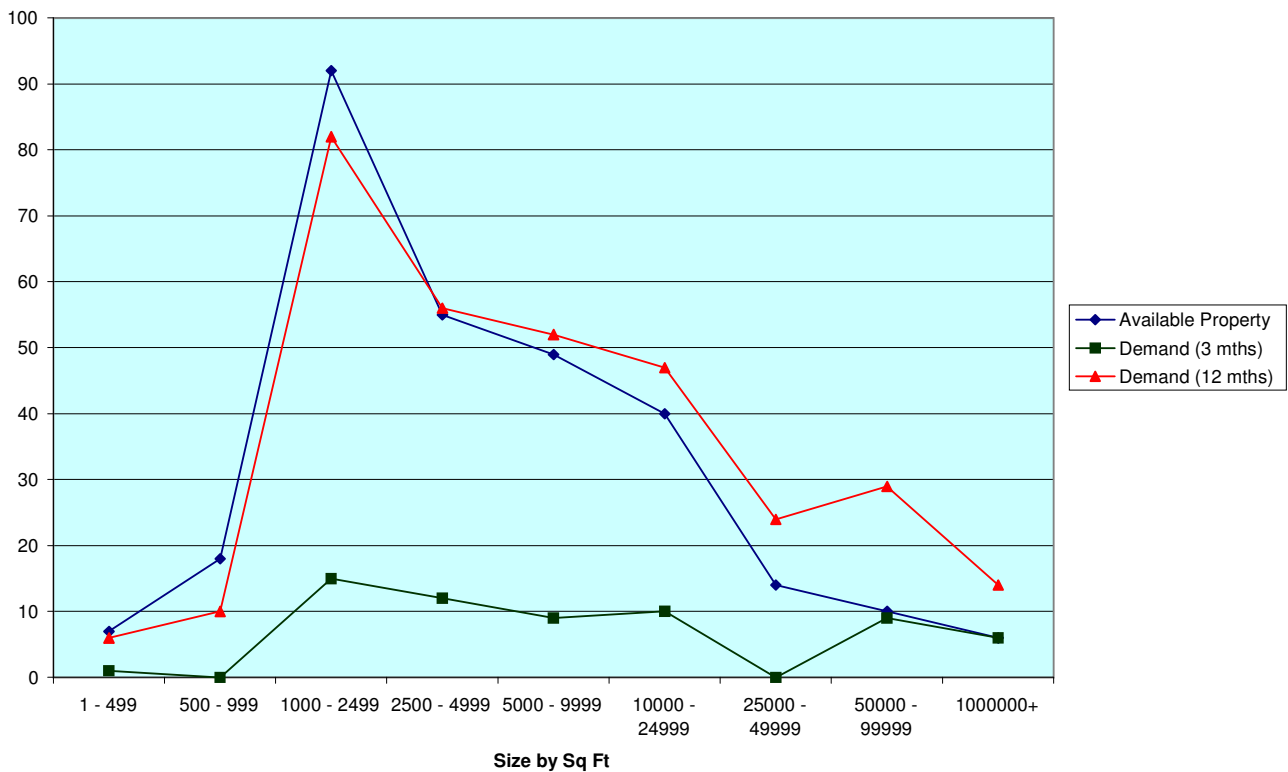


Figure 10 demonstrates that available units and demand over a 12 month period was quite closely aligned as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, with demand slightly outstripping supply for industrial/warehouse units in the larger sized units. The demand over the 3 months prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 however, shows that demand had dropped quite dramatically.

**Office**

	Units available (31.3.09)	Demand – previous 3 mths	Demand previous 12 mths
1 – 499 sq ft	34	1	10
500 – 999 sq ft	63	3	12
1,000 – 2,499 sq ft	105	12	56
2,500 – 4,999 sq ft	53	6	23
5,000 – 9,999 sq ft	36	6	12
10,000 – 24,999 sq ft	22	3	16
25,000 + sq ft	7	1	13

Figure 11

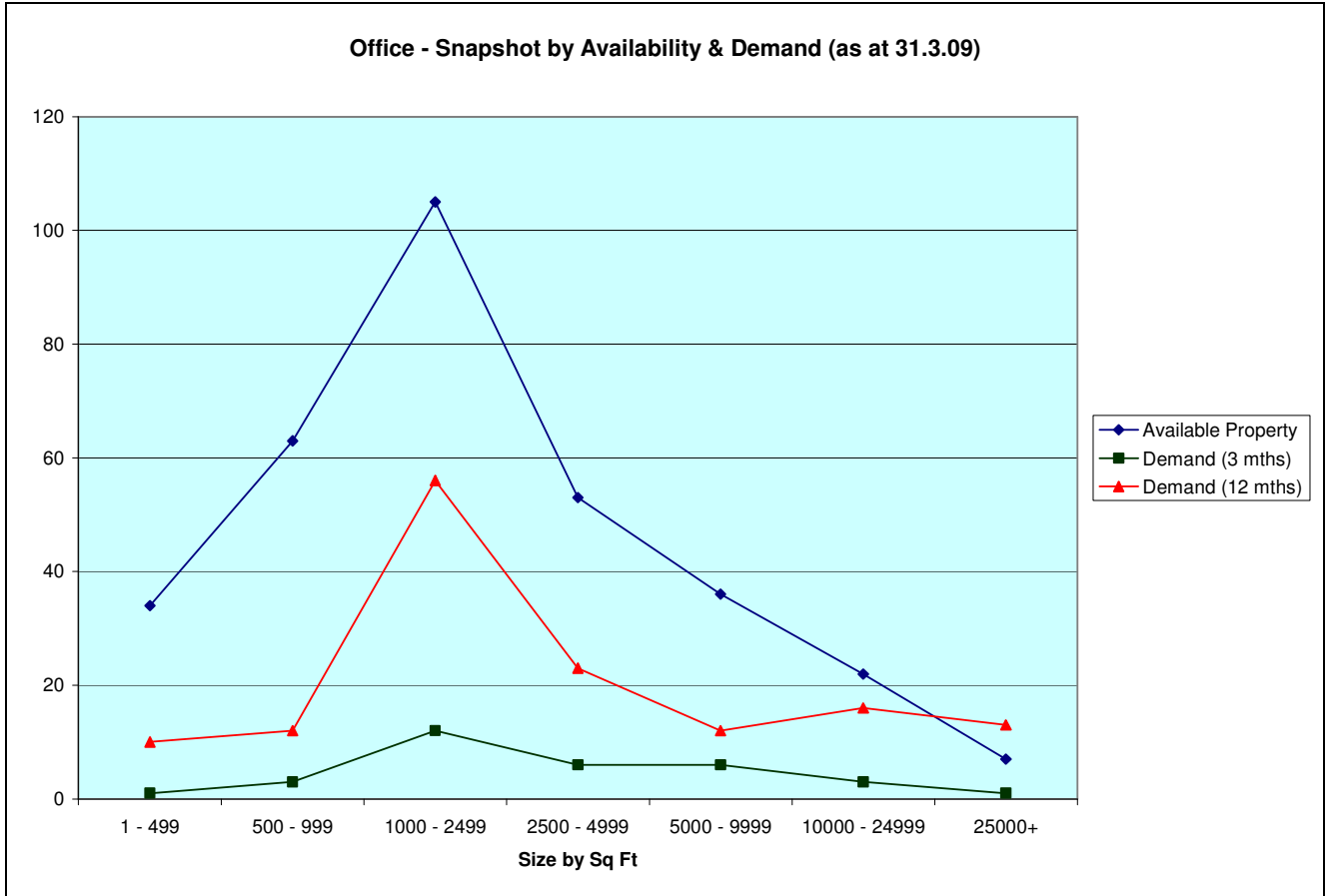


Figure 11 demonstrates an over-supply of available office properties in all but the over 25,000 sq ft category as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. This fits with some of the anecdotal evidence received from local agents, and market conditions, although again it indicates that availability and demand for units around the 500 – 4,999 sq ft unit sizes remains highest.

**Retail**

	Units available (31.3.09)	Demand – previous 3 mths	Demand previous 12 mths
1 – 499 sq ft	30	0	3
500 – 999 sq ft	46	1	8
1,000 – 1,499 sq ft	16	1	15
1,500 – 2,499 sq ft	17	5	25
2,500 – 4,999 sq ft	10	5	20
5,000 – 9,999 sq ft	3	2	9
10,000 - 24,999 sq ft	2	1	10
25,000 + sq ft	1	1	7

Figure 12

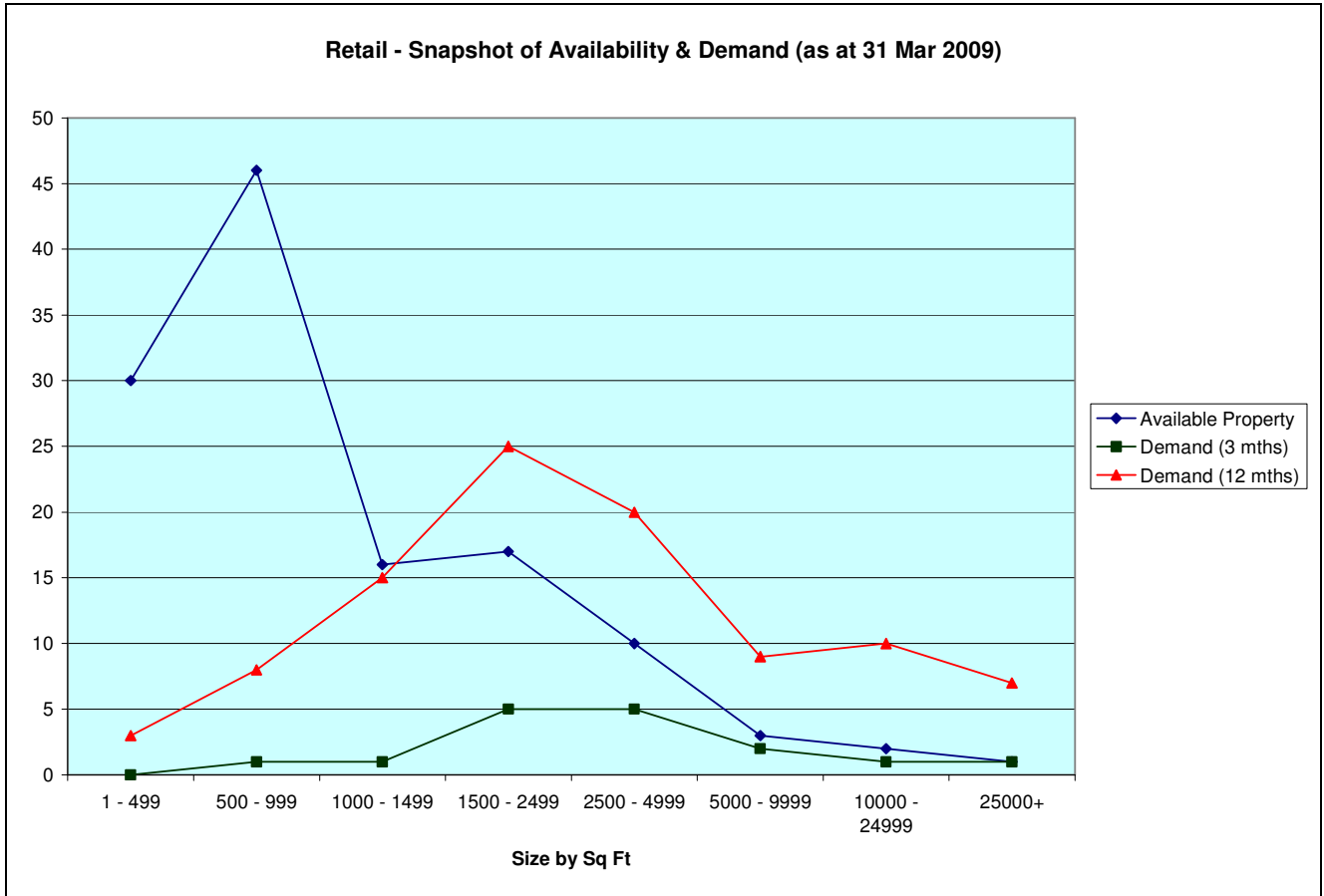


Figure 12 demonstrates that retail availability and demand was the least aligned of the three property types as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, with a large number of smaller units becoming available, in line with the closures of many small retailers across the county. Interestingly, demand for medium to larger units over the preceding 12 months outstripped availability.

## 11.0 Successes

The monitoring of successful relocations and new investments remains a challenge, particularly where enquiries are registered by third parties, or when companies do not respond to follow up communications. Some positive outcomes from the Commercial Land & Property enquiry service are listed below however, and help to indicate how this information is helping to support business growth and job creation.

### Enquiries registered: January – December 2007

*Ref:*

2919	Interior furnishings company relocated to retail unit in Tetbury
3001	Major Cotswold investor assisted with additional office base in Cirencester
3018	Aerial installation company relocated from Evesham to Tewkesbury – job creation anticipated
3054	Birmingham-based plant hire company secured additional distribution site in Tewkesbury
3136	National training company set up a new office in Gloucester, creating 6 new jobs – rising to 10
3201	London-based insurance company set up a new facility in Mitcheldean – circa 200 new jobs
3232	County-based charity successfully relocated to new offices in Gloucester
2720	Automotive assembly training facility for young people – 16 new jobs and £2m cap.ex.

### Enquiries registered: January – December 2008

*Ref:*

3287	Event hire firm successfully relocated to Moreton-in-Marsh creating 3 F/T and 5 P/T new jobs
3306	Laundry firm successfully relocated to Stroud taking approx 1500 sq ft.
3323	Beer cask rental company relocated on the North Forest of Dean/Herefordshire border
3481	Costume company relocated from Worcestershire to Cheltenham, creating 2 new jobs
3474	Plumbing & electrical company relocated within Cheltenham
3605	New clothing internet trader successfully found premises in the Forest of Dean
3669	Assisted SME to find new business premises in Cheltenham safeguarding from closure
3728	Training & consultancy company successfully relocated to Quedgeley
4057	Aerospace training facility successfully relocating to Kemble Airfield – 30 jobs (safeguarded and new)

This list will continue to change as many enquiries are on-going and we would encourage agents with details of successes to submit details or contacts for follow up.