New MORI Report Shows Increase in Satisfaction with Local Areas

Contributed by MORI
Saturday, 25 June 2005
Last Updated Saturday, 25 June 2005

â€˜Street sceneâ€™ improves: encouraging trends but strong concerns continue
New MORI report shows increase in satisfaction with local areas â€“ but there is still much to do

MORIâ€™s latest report on liveability shows that public concerns about quality of life remains focused on street crime. The first report in 2002, â€œThe Rising Prominence of Liveability - Are we condemned to a life of grime?â€•, reviewed what really mattered to people about the areas where they live. It showed basic problems such as litter, kids hanging around on street corners, dumped vehicles and vandalism having a significant, damaging effect on quality of life.
Three years on, MORI has revisited the liveability issue â€“ and its analysis is encouraging. MORIâ€™s research suggests work by central and local government over the past four years is now being recognised by the public - but there is still a long way to go.
MORIâ€™s new report also highlights the impact of physical capital, the very nature of place - how well designed and maintained it is and the impact that this has on our lives. MORIâ€™s new Physical Capital Index, which features in this report, is as strongly related to overall satisfaction with an area as deprivation.
Major plans for new communities right across England mean there are opportunities to be seized. At the same time, dealing with declining populations in many of our northern towns and cities presents real challenges, including in the areas of traditional terraced houses which - controversially for some - are due to be bulldozed.?
Ben Page, director of the MORI Social Research Institute and one of the report authors, says: â€œThis shows that what really matters to people is how safe, clean and green it is where they live â€“ not big services like education and the NHS, where at a local level, many recognise progress.
â€•It suggests that a downward trend has been reversed â€“ we are not going to hell in a handcart. But thereâ€™s a lot to do to meet peopleâ€™s aspirations.â€•
In his foreword for the report, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott says: â€œToday's follow up report shows the progress we have made since MORI's previous report on liveability in 2002. More people recognise that the physical appearance of their area is improving. Satisfaction with parks and open spaces, for example, is up from 63% to 71% over the past three years.
There is less litter, fewer abandoned vehicles and better quality green spaces. While this is encouraging, we know we need to spread the benefits more widely and close the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the country."