

Does local matter?

Introduction

The overland Silk Road that connected Asia, Africa, and Europe is a good example of the transformative power of translocal exchange that existed in the European view of the world prior to contact with the Americas. Though silk was the major trade item from China, many other goods were traded, and religions, philosophies, technologies and diseases also travelled along the Silk Routes. More recently mobile phones and the internet have transformed the way we globally interact and do business.

What is important to us locally?

We asked whether 'localness' matters now and people's thoughts included:

- **What is local to you?** Somewhere unique? How does this fit with Globalisation?
- **Personal network** friends and business contacts
- **Community** familiar faces, places and groups
- **Local history**, contributes towards our sense of identity
- **Environment & Amenities:** Green space / parks, recreational and sports facilities, buildings, shops, cinemas, libraries etc
- **Business:** Markets / customers and suppliers. Local shops. Personal face to face service, which may justify a higher price, can be difficult to maintain if it entails excessive travel. There was a perception that local products and produce might be of a higher quality, but for items such as CDs and books, those available locally might be more expensive. Specialist items commanding a relatively high price such as vinyl records tend to be sold locally.
- **Opinions and views** Our local environment and the people surrounding us have a major role in shaping our views – even including the Political party we vote for at a General Election.
- **Big society**

Our local high street

Most people expressed the view that the local high street in some form was important. If we want local shops then we need to give them our custom. Reference was made to the report on the future of the high street by Mary Portas. This included the following sections:

- Getting our town centres running like businesses
- Getting the basics right to allow businesses to flourish
- Levelling the playing field
- Defining Landlords' roles and responsibilities
- Giving communities a greater say
- A few words of advice to Britain's shopkeepers: Experience, service and specialism
- *Re-imagining our high streets as destinations for socialising, culture, health, wellbeing, creativity and learning*

The new economic foundation research

Foresight, an organisation which helps the UK government to think systematically about the future commissioned nef to develop 'five ways to well being': a set of evidence based actions to improve personal well-being. nef is "an independent think-and-do tank that inspires and demonstrates real economic well-being" and the project which was based on analysis of third party research, concluded: (www.neweconomics.org/publications/entry/five-ways-to-well-being-postcards)

1. **People connection.** Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues, and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. Think of these as the cornerstones of your life and invest time in developing them. Building these connections will support and enrich you every day.
2. **Being active.** Go for a walk or run. Step outside. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and one that suits your level of mobility and fitness.
3. **Take notice.** Be curious. Catch sight of the beautiful. Remark on the unusual. Notice the changing seasons. Savour the moment, whether you are walking to work, eating lunch or talking to friends. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experience will help you appreciate what matters to you.
4. **Learning.** Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you confident as well as being fun.
5. **Give.** Do something nice for a friend or stranger. Thank someone. Volunteer your time. Join a community group. Look out, as well as in. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with those around you.

Task two- Quiz

We asked people about the Surrey South West parliamentary constituency for which the recent general election results were: 1 Jeremy Hunt (Con 59.9%), 2. Mark Webber (UKIP 9.9%), 3. Howard Kaye (Lab 9.5%), 4. Louise Irvine (NHA National Health Action 8.5%), 5. Patrick Haveron (LD 6.3), 6. Susan Ryland (Green 5.4), 7 Paul Robinson (SN 0.6).

The answers for **Surrey South West** and the **UK** are highlighted

Question 1: For every 100 people who could vote – howmany did?			
A	65	B	67
C	75	D	91
Question 2: What is the average age here?			
A	31	B	35
C	39	D	40
Question 3: For every 100 people who live here, how many were born outside the UK?			
A	5	B	9
C	11	D	13
Question 4: For every 100 people, aged 16 and over how many have at least a degree level qualification?			
A	15	B	27
C	28	D	41
Question 5: For every 100 working age adults, how many claim Job Seekers Allowance?			
A	1	B	2
C	3	D	11
Question 6: What is the average weekly full-time earning for residents who are employed?			

A	£518	B	£659	C	£728	D	£899
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Question 7: For every 100 people, how many describe their own health as 'good' or 'very good'?

A	81	B	82	C	85	D	86
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Question 8 For every 100 who are employed here, how many work in the public sector?

A	10	B	19	C	25	D	31
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Question 9 What is the average property price in this constituency?

A	£210,000	B	£250,000	C	£335,000	D	£1,000,000
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Shipleys Business Breakfast people

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