

News Release



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20 March 1998

THUMBS UP FROM LOCALS FOR LDDC

More than two thirds (73%) of people living in London Docklands think that the prospects for the area are good and that the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) has done a good job (68%) in regenerating the area over the last 17 years.

These are amongst the preliminary findings of a survey of residents carried out by MORI, commissioned by the LDDC to gauge the views of residents as the LDDC prepares to complete its remit on 31 March 1998 and to hand on its responsibilities to the local authorities, English Partnerships and others. The survey carried out between October 1997 and February 1998 updates previous surveys carried out by Gallup and MORI for the Corporation in 1988, 1990, 1994 and 1996.

Neil Spence, LDDC's Joint Chief Executive, comments: "It is very encouraging that attitudes towards the Corporation, perceptions about the quality of life and optimism about prospects for the area have all improved over time and most notably so over the last four years. The results of this survey coupled with the overall achievements of the Corporation on the ground underlines the success of the LDDC since 1981 in bringing about the physical, social and economic regeneration of London Docklands."

The LDDC's Performance

- The proportion of residents who think the Corporation has done a very/fairly good job in the area since 1981 has increased from 53% in 1994 to 65% in 1996 and to 68% in the 1998 survey. There has been a corresponding fall in the numbers who believe the LDDC has done a poor job - currently fewer than one in ten (6%) think this, compared with 13% in 1996 and as many as one in five (21%) in 1994.

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- **Net confidence in the LDDC (the proportion of residents expressing a great deal/a little confidence in the organisation minus those having not a lot/none at all) has improved since the 1996 survey, from +34% to +41%, reflecting both a change in the *national* climate of public opinion as well as a *local* recognition of the Corporation's achievements.**
- **In the 1998 survey 60% of residents expressed a great deal/a little confidence in the LDDC with 19% having not a lot/none at all.**

Prospects/Quality of Life

- **The high levels of optimism in the prospects for Docklands found in 1996 have been surpassed in this year's survey, with 73% believing prospects to be very/fairly good - a 7% increase since 1996. About one in 10 (11%) believe prospects to be very/fairly poor which compares with 18% in 1996.**
- **There are notable differences in optimism by area with Surrey Docks (84% very/fairly good), Bermondsey Riverside (81%) and Limehouse (77%) residents more optimistic than others, particularly those in the Royal Docks (53%). The most pronounced improvements have been on the Isle of Dogs with "good" ratings having increased amongst residents there from 58% to 69%.**
- **When asked "Do you think that the quality of life for you and your family is better, worse or the same as it was in 1981?" residents answered in the following proportions: 35% better, 14% worse and 40% the same. This compares with 41%, 22% and 28% respectively in 1996.**
- **A larger proportion of residents believe that they/their families and their local communities have benefited from LDDC activities. In 1996 59% of residents felt that the local community had benefited a great deal/to some extent from LDDC activities, this has now risen further to 62%.**

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- When asked, "Thinking of this area, how would you say it has changed since 1981?", six out of 10 residents (60%) say it has got better with around one in 10 (12%) saying it has got worse. This compares with 61% and 17% respectively in 1996.

LDDC's Completion of Remit

Since 1994 the LDDC has been progressively handing on its responsibilities area by area, in the main to the local authorities. Bermondsey Riverside passed to Southwark in October 1994; Beckton to Newham in December 1995; Surrey Docks to Southwark in December 1996; Wapping and Limehouse to Tower Hamlets in January 1997; the Isle of Dogs to Tower Hamlets and the dock estate to British Waterways in October 1997. LDDC's land holdings and contractual obligations in the Royal Docks will pass to English Partnerships, working with the London Borough of Newham, at the end of March.

- The proportion of residents saying that they do not know what effect the wind up of the Corporation will have on their area has fallen to one in five (20%) compared with 27% and 28% in previous surveys. Since 1996 there has been a shift of opinion away from "don't know" towards the view that the wind up of the LDDC will make no difference.
- Among those yet to have long term experience of the Corporation's absence (those living on the Isle of Dogs and in the Royal Docks) 36% believe their area will get worse and only 8% believe it will get better. This compares with figures of 38% and 8% amongst *all* Docklands residents in 1996.
- Around six in 10 (58%) of residents living in those "dedesignation areas" where the LDDC has stopped working, believe that this has made no difference to the area where they live. Just over one in 10 (11%) believe it to have a negative effect with 25% saying "don't know".

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- The difference between the *anticipated* and *actual* effect of dedesignation is consistent with the findings of other policy research studies carried out by MORI.

Issues and Services

- Net satisfaction has increased uniformly for key services although notably, satisfaction with bus services has fallen from 34% in 1996 to just 19%. Around half (48%) of residents are satisfied with this service against 29% who expressed dissatisfaction.
- Shops remain the most mentioned facility needed (32% this year, 7% down on 1996) followed by buses up 7% on 1996 to 26% and leisure facilities for the young, the latter mentioned by 23%, down 7%.

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Notes to Editors

- These are preliminary findings based on 1,039 interviews conducted face-to-face, between 10 October 1997 and 21 February 1998, using a random, pre-selected sampling methodology.
- The sample has been stratified to achieve robust base sizes in all seven dedesignation areas as well as the UDA as a whole. Data have been weighted according to the respective populations of the seven dedesignation areas and interlocking weights have also been applied according to the sex and age profile of each area.