

BRITAIN NOT SO DIVIDED, AS NEW RESEARCH FINDS MOST OF US TRUST OUR NEIGHBOURS

Submitted by: BJL Group

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- Despite toxic political climate nearly two third (57%) of Brits know and trust their neighbours
- Community Spirit Index from Power to Change reveals importance of community businesses in shaping positive communities across England

We're living in divisive times - but Brits say their sense of community spirit is alive and well and helping rebuild fractured neighbourhoods.

The newly-released Community Spirit Index from independent trust Power to Change shows how community-run events and businesses are driving change and providing vital support in UK towns and cities, despite the divisive political climate.

The report, released to launch Community Business Weekend (16-19 May), highlights cities where neighbourhood working is strongest and reveals that despite a polarised political landscape, at a local level the majority of us (57%) know and trust our neighbours.

Leeds comes out top of the index, with 70% reporting they feel close to the people that live near them, followed by 68% of those in Grimsby, 65% of people in Wigan and 62% of people in Bristol and Newcastle.

This sense of community spirit is being used as a force for good, channelled into events and community-owned businesses - driving positive social change.

Over a third (34%) of the 1,200 respondents said working with others on local events is an important way to bring people together, while one in five (20%) feel embracing community spirit is helping unite their communities.

A further 44% think communities are still good at pulling together in times of need and 53% take part in local projects already, including setting up, running and volunteering in community businesses

And that sense of community spirit is growing. According to the Index, 40% of us want to learn more about how to help their community, one in three (29%) want to become involved in a community business and 61% are keen to support community business owners and leaders.

As well as volunteering, consumers are using positive spending to support their neighbourhoods. Almost half (47%) prefer to shop in a business whose profits are invested in the community if they can.

Next week Power to Change launches its annual Community Business Weekend (16 to 19 May inclusive). The annual open doors event will see community businesses across England showcasing their work and inviting people to take a closer look at what they do and how they might get involved.

Speaking about the Community Spirit Index and the Community Business Weekend, Power to Change Chief

Executive, Vidhya Alakeson says:

“At this time of huge uncertainty it’s fantastic to hear that community spirit is still alive and well. People are more determined than ever to pull together for the common good. We know from our work on the ground how important that connection is for a successful community business, and how much those businesses improve the lives of communities.

“Community Business Weekend is a great opportunity for people to reconnect with their local community and to learn more about the amazing work of the 8,000 community businesses across the country that are working to transform their local area.”

Community Spirit Index

Do you know and trust your neighbours?

Leeds – 70%

Grimsby - 68%

Bristol – 62%

Wigan – 65%

Newcastle – 62%

Hartlepool – 59%

Ipswich – 58%

Plymouth – 56%

Birmingham – 54%

Liverpool - 54%

Manchester – 50%

Brighton – 48%

London – 45%

Find out what’s happening all over the country for Community Business Weekend 16-19 May on www.communitybusinessweekend.org

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