

For immediate release

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Southern comfort versus friendly Northerners – how desirable is your city?

PlaceIndex, a new study from YouGov, is an exciting new way of scoring Britain's major cities. The study ranks cities by various factors including cultural experience, atmosphere, ease of getting around, shops and restaurants, safety, investment potential and recommendation to visit. All indicators are combined to form an overall "desirability" score.

London, as expected, tops the index on a number of indicators, notably cultural experience, good cuisine and shopping. With the famous 'black cabs' roaming the streets, a good bus network and the hustle and bustle of the underground, people also find London easy to get around.

York and Edinburgh also score highly, surpassing London on atmosphere, safety and overall as the most desirable city. With friendly neighbours, a strong perception of being safe and with people likely to recommend to a friend, it is no surprise that these two cities are considered an investment haven. There is a clear pattern that the more 'unfriendly' cities are clustered towards the south, London rated lowest for having friendly and helpful neighbours.

It seems that Oxford and Cambridge have more to offer than just their universities, not only are they considered safe cities to visit but they provide a cultural experience, a good atmosphere and good food.

Despite being the birth place of the Brontë sisters and more recently pop idol Gareth Gates, Bradford is classed as Britain's least desirable city in the index, coming last on atmosphere, safety, investment potential, ease of getting around and likelihood to recommend to a friend. However Bradford does score better on quality of restaurants – its highest ranking on any measure. Sunderland and Salford also prop up the list on several indicators, notably variety of restaurants and shops.

Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool are a mixed bag, scoring highly on variety of shops and quality of restaurants, but low on safety.

Commenting on the results, Tasha Satara, Senior Research Executive in YouGov's Public Sector team said "PlaceIndex is a really exciting way of seeing how Britain's cities fare on a number of measures. It provides cities with the opportunity to see how they are perceived by the general public and how far this perception is from reality. PlaceIndex helps understand why people want to visit, work and live in certain cities and this information can be used to inform tourism strategies and provide guidance on the development of local amenities or new businesses."

Notes to editors

PlaceIndex is based upon interviews with a representative sample of 10,000 GB adults drawn from YouGov's online panel. Fieldwork was undertaken in July 2009.

Full report can be found attached and more information is available on request.

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About Public Sector Consulting

YouGov has a dedicated team of specialists in public sector research, working with central government departments, executive agencies, local governments, housing associations, charities and NGOs to deliver research and consultancy services.

YouGov were recently accepted onto the Central Office of Information (COI) Market Research framework.

Michael Wagstaff, Head of Public Sector Consulting, has over 15 years research experience and has worked extensively with central government departments, local authorities, executive agencies, utilities, housing associations and regulatory bodies.

About YouGov

YouGov is an international, full service research company primarily using online panels to provide quantitative and qualitative research across a range of specialisms. These include consumer markets, financial services, public sector, technology and telecoms and media. YouGov's full service offering spans added-value consultancy, syndicated and product offers, omnibus and field and tab services.

YouGov is considered the pioneer of online market research. Through panel management expertise, flexibility and an innovative approach to recruitment, YouGov operates a quality panel of about 250,000 UK members representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types, with excellent response rates. YouGov also specialises in growing and maintaining dedicated panels of specialist consumer and professional audiences.

YouGov has been acclaimed as the UK's most accurate opinion pollster and dominates Britain's media polling. YouGov is one of the most quoted agencies in Britain and has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the success of its survey methods and quality of its client service work.

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