

Release Date: 10th April 2008
Issued on behalf of Local Opinion

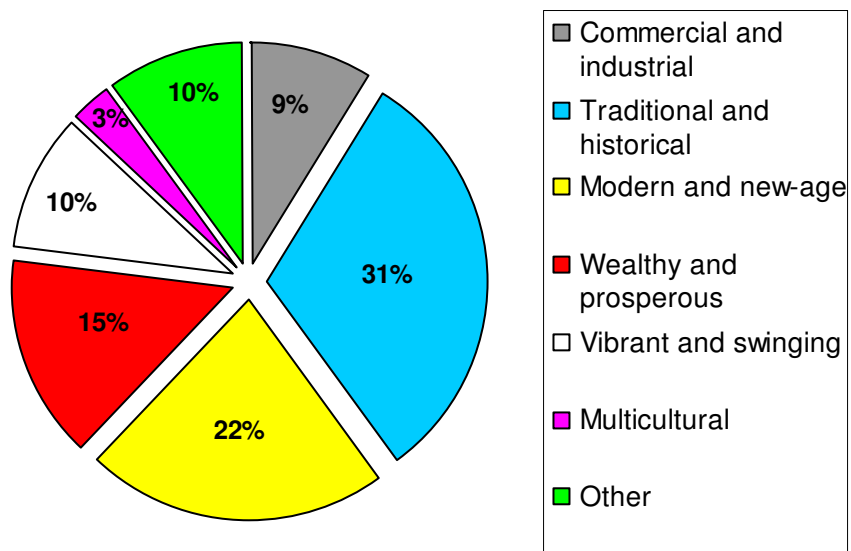


ASHFORD SUFFERS FROM IDENTITY CRISIS

Nearly half (45%) of Ashford's residents believe the town has no identity according to a survey carried out by independent Kent-based market research agency, Local Opinion.

The survey polled people in the town on how they would characterise Ashford. The results show that 35% identify the town with being traditional and historical while 32% consider it to be commercial and industrial.

Ashford residents are also divided over what the town's identity *should be*:



Local Opinion research executive, Julie Thompson, said: “This survey has thrown up some intriguing differences, some of which can be put down to generational divides. However, these results do suggest the town has something of a split personality.

“The £650 million ongoing rejuvenation campaign in Ashford has created a lot of disruption and may have caused people to be uncertain about the town’s character and where it is heading. With the completion of the various projects over the next few years, as well as the introduction of the high-speed rail link to London, residents are no doubt hoping the town will develop a strong identity we will carry on surveying to measure any change.

“Everyone can have their say on this and other topics affecting their communities by registering with Local Opinion.”

Surveys run every two to three months and can be completed online, by phone or by post and the results will appear on the Local Opinion website.

The sample size for this survey was 67 Ashford residents.

To register:

Visit: www.localopinion.co.uk

Email: info@localopinion.co.uk

Tel: 01732 874054

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- Local Opinion complies with the highest market research standards
- Reportage of these results must include the sample size
- Respondents are free to withdraw from Local Opinion’s survey pool at anytime

Press enquiries to

John Humphreys / Oliver Bisson at Edwards Harvey

Tel. 01622 604600 or email. john.humphreys@edwardsharvey.com